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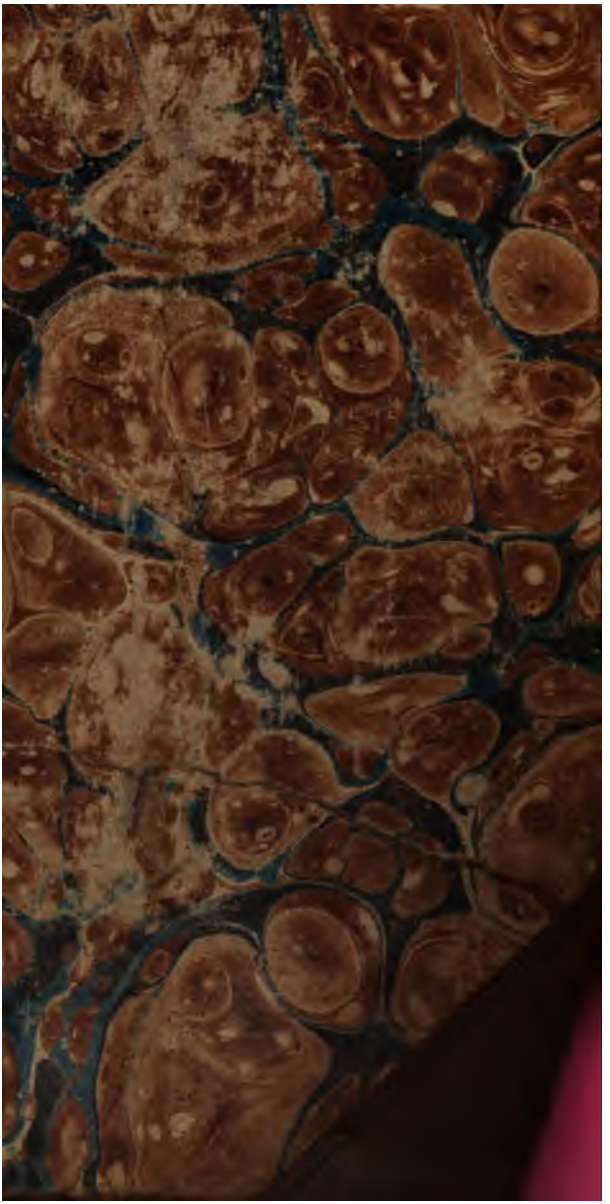

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VILLAGE BELLES.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

LONDON:
BALDWIN AND CRADOCK, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1833.

183.

G. WOODFALL, ANGEL COURT, SKINNER STREET, LONDON.

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ERRATA.

Page 3, line 12, *for* Mr. *read* Mrs.
8, —— 16, and elsewhere, *for* Heeley *read* Hexley.
19, —— 21, *for* impatiently *read* implicitly.
41, —— 11, *dele* as.
87, last line, *dele* not.
135, line 20, *for* graves *read* quavers.
162, —— 11, *for* gleaming *read* glancing.
173, —— 16, *for* Tableau vivante *read* Tableau vivant.
187, —— 16, *for* am *read* are.
199, —— 21, *for* rock *read* nook.
221, —— 1, *for* there *read* here.
281, —— 16, *for* reluctingly *read* relentingly.

VILLAGE BELLES.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS.

THE youngest of the two Miss Parkinsons, of Park Place, amazingly disobliged her family by marrying the Reverend Henry Wellford, vicar of Summerfield, who had nothing on earth but good looks, good qualities, and four hundred and fifty pounds a year to recommend him. Alas! how did her father storm and rage, how did her mother fume and fret, how did aunt Diana congratulate herself that she had settled her thirty thousand pounds on Hannah her eldest niece, how did the aforesaid Hannah sneer and observe "she had thought how it would end," and how did the good folks of Stoke Barton stare and sigh and shake their heads, and bless heaven that no poor

vicar had ever fallen in love with any of *their* daughters! Catherine Parkinson, who had refused Sir Robert Bosanquet! Henry Wellford, who might have had rich Miss Trotter for asking! So unadvised of both parties—nobody was surprised at old Mr. Parkinson's shutting his doors for ever against the young couple; or wasted much thought on the fate of the fine young man and the beautiful girl after the first excitement of astonishment was over, except Dr. Pennington, the rector of Stoke Barton; and *he* was second cousin to Henry Wellford, so no wonder!

Miss Hannah, having exhausted her spleen on the subject of her sister Kate's imprudent match, found herself in her twenty-ninth year on the verge of old-maidism, with

> 'Nobody coming to marry her,
> Nobody coming to woo;'—

not even a poor vicar; and the subject was beginning to give her considerable uneasiness, when her father's heir-at-law, Mr. James Parkinson, who for many years had regularly visited Park Place in the shooting season, came down for the express purpose of making her an offer. He was

only too good for her, being cheerful, personable, and easy-tempered. The gentleman was accepted, the marriage celebrated with all convenient speed; and the wedded pair went steadily through all the gradations customary in the hymeneal state—exactly in the inverse order of those to be found in a sonata. First they were "brillante," and even when the wedding clothes grew dirty, continued "allegro," then sank into "allegretto," next to "moderato"—then came "a-capriccio," and at length a monotonous "andante," enlivened only by a few of Mr. James Parkinson's bursts "a furore." To say truth, if it had not been for the gentleman's imperturbable good humour, her peevish, fractious temper would have been unbearable; and as it was, they went on like two performers on the piano-forte playing separate airs by way of duet—he, in calm serenity, jogging on with "Just like Love" in the bass, while she in another key, and with shrill vehemence, was running up and down the indignant scales of "Trifler, forbear!" in the treble.

The mind turns with pleasure from this matrimonial concert to the neglected young pair in Summerfield vicarage. Catherine Wellford, per-

fectly satisfied with the companion and station she had chosen for life, yet felt a little natural compunction at having dared to make herself happy in opposition to the will of those whom nature had constituted her arbiters. She endeavoured, therefore, to atone for her breach of filial obedience by humble letters to her parents; but as they remained true to that inflexibility of purpose which, exercised in daily minutiæ, had in a great measure driven their daughter from her home, she at length abstained from appeals which she found to be useless.

Nothing could be much less inviting than the first appearance of Summerfield vicarage. It was a small, dull-looking, red-brick building, such as may often be seen inhabited by the *curés* of the French provinces, having a little inverted battlement-like brickwork ornament,—stay, what is the architectural word? *dentils*—a row of square teeth, as it were, running along the front; a tiled roof, and heavy latticed windows with deep seats; an ungainly looking house, in short, but one which like some plain women, might be rendered attractive by dress and decoration. A smoky parlour on one side of the hall or passage, a small study

on the other, kitchen and et ceteras behind, stairs up and down at every corner, and four oddly shaped bedrooms above. The garden, separated from the churchyard by a ruinous paling, was filled on one side with potatoes, on the other with cauliflowers run to seed; and the walks were verdant with moss. Such was the home to which Henry Wellford, who had only been presented to the vicarage just before his marriage, brought the young bride who had hitherto been accustomed to every comfort except that of kindness. Without complaining of their lot, they immediately set about the improvement of the face of things around them. The parlour chimney was cured of smoking, the walls were papered, book-shelves and curtains put up, the garden walks cleared, evergreens planted, and the palings mended and painted. Having made this promising beginning, Mr. and Mrs. Wellford had leisure to study each other's characters and those of their neighbours. Henry found his wife possessed of an ardent, enquiring mind which had hitherto been little cultivated, and a disposition which not even constant irritation had been able to spoil, prone to repent of its hasty errors, and full of charity and

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melting kindness. In each other's society they felt no weariness, but neither of them was of a temper so fastidious as to turn with distaste from those among whom Providence had placed them, because their habits were less refined than their own. Almost immediately opposite the church, in a residence known as Okely Park, and which only required better keeping up to make it rank as a handsome country seat, lived old Lady Worral. The only two houses with sash windows in the village were tenanted, the one by Mr. Good the apothecary, the other by Mr. Greenway, a retired schoolmaster. Farmer Holland, the happy parent of three bouncing daughters, occupied a substantial dwelling in the midst of his corn-fields, about half a mile from Summerfield. The remaining population consisted of tradespeople and peasantry, who received the conciliatory visits of the new vicar and his wife with civility and gratitude. On nearer acquaintance with the superior class of their neighbours, they discovered that old Lady Worral was busy and interfering, eccentric in her dress and blunt in her manners; Mr. and Mrs. Good the best people in the world; Mr. Greenway a martyr to the rheumatism, and his

wife a fetcher and carrier of other people's observations; Farmer Holland a complete John Bull, with his joke and tankard; and the three Miss Hollands handsome, cheerful, and bustling. Young Mrs. Wellford was at first rather annoyed by the constant supervision of her titled neighbour; for old Lady Worral was always popping in upon her, in the garden, the parlour, or the kitchen; but she soon ceased to care whether she was caught in a coarse apron, or a gown pulled through the pocket hole, shelling peas or making a pudding; for Lady Worral had no notion of a "parson's wife sticking up to be a fine lady." Indeed the character of a fine lady was the object of her supreme contempt; for though she piqued herself much on her ancient birth, "being descended from the De Barneville that went on the first crusade," yet she considered it no degradation of her dignity to check her steward's accounts, look after her turkeys, scold the village children, and give Mrs. Wellford a receipt by word of mouth for that "heterogeneous combination of culinary ingredients" ycleped a hodge-podge.

The defunct Sir John Worral had been something of a humourist. "Knowledge is power,"

said he, "the power of making one's self disagreeable." That he might not make himself disagreeable, he never opened a book after he became his own master; but devoted himself to the gratification of an extraordinary passion for bell-ringing. At first he used to practise in the parish church, but his constant peals disturbing the studies or the slumbers of Mr. Wellford's predecessor, a quarrel ensued between baronet and vicar, and Sir John set up an opposition belfry in his own grounds. Here he and his men servants amused themselves many a long hour; ding-donging the good people of Summerfield out of their senses, and wearing Mr. Greenway to a thread with low spirits, except when a north wind carried the noise to Heeley and nearly put a stop to the business of the place. Sometimes they pealed, at other times they tolled; at length, Death, out of patience at so much tolling without any burials, took off Sir John. His relict sold the bells, and the campanile fell into decay.

Mrs. Wellford, from her cheerful, complying disposition, became a great favourite with the old dowager; a character which entailed on her so much vexatious interference that she was often

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ing over the churchyard palings, or riding a rough-coated donkey in the adjoining shadowy lanes.

The news of old Mrs. Parkinson's death was communicated to her daughter through the friendly medium of Dr. Pennington, who had often unsuccessfully attempted to obtain a mitigation of the parental sentence. In less than a twelvemonth, old Mr. Parkinson followed his wife to the grave; and Hannah, after a fourteen years' silence, condescended to announce the misfortune to her sister. "There is no mention of you," she wrote, "in his will; but as he said that he forgave you on his death-bed, I see no impropriety in writing to you, and shall be glad to hear from you in return. Inclosed is a fifty pound note for your mourning."

Mr. Wellford halted at the word "impropriety" with an angry "pshaw!" His wife, touched by softened remembrances of home, was sure poor Hannah meant kindly. She wiped away some natural tears, and lost no time in answering her sister's letter. The correspondence languished between them, however, in spite of Mrs. Wellford's endeavours to keep it up; and some months

had elapsed in silence when Mrs. Parkinson at length wrote to the following effect.

Park Place, Stoke Barton,
May 20th.

DEAR SISTER,

I received yours of the 28d of February. I am sorry to hear Mr. Wellford was troubled with the tooth-ache when you wrote. Why does not he try nut-gall? Mr. Curtis says there's nothing like it. "Don't tell me," says he, "of tooth-ache—try nut-gall." Aunt Diana is much the same in health as she used to be, but I think she ages very much. For all her fresh looks, I should not be surprised at her dropping off any day. Mr. Parkinson is uncommon well, though very deaf. As to myself, though I look clear, I'm always ailing. I'm sure I haven't known what it is to have a good night, I don't know how long. Mr. Curtis says he thinks I should be better for change of scene, and I think so too, for I am sick of Stoke Barton; but Mr. Parkinson does not like moving. I tell him he is an old man before his time, for he is as fixed in all his ways, and as much nailed to one place, as if he was seventy. However, I don't know, if it came to the push,

whether I really could make up my own mind to stir, for there is so much vexation and trouble in travelling! and besides, I don't know who I could comfortably leave behind, for Hawkins is uncommonly sly. There would be fine doings, I warrant. Open house-keeping, and what not.

I think it wears me a good deal hallooing to Mr. Parkinson, for he can't hear unless you raise your voice quite sharp, and yet he's always saying "don't speak so loud," and quite vexed to be thought deaf. I'm sure I often think you are very happy in having a large family about you; for Mr. Parkinson, being so hard of hearing, is no companion at all; and aunt Diana, you know, was never very entertaining. Do let one of your girls come and stay with me. I think it would amuse me; and if I take a liking to her, it shan't be the worse for her. The distance between us is only forty miles, and as I suppose you have a man, he will be quite a sufficient protection for her on the road. I should like my namesake best, but as you say she is so useful to you, I suppose you can't spare her, so let me have Rosina. Of course I shall keep her in clothes; and she will be in no want of toys, as there are my old dominoes and

the doll's cradle that you may remember my poor father gave me at Brighton, besides the swing at the end of the walnut-tree walk. The Penningtons are very neighbourly, and desired to be remembered to you when I wrote. The doctor, that was such a well-looking man when I married, is now stout and very red-faced, but the same high spirits as ever. Mrs. Pennington, to my mind, is too independent, almost insolent, I sometimes think, though to be sure she was of a very good family. The children are rude and noisy; and I am thankful our grounds are so large; as, having only a wall between them and the rectory garden, I am sure if we were closer my poor head would be split with their shouts of laughter. I think the doctor does very wrong to encourage them as he does in romping, noisy games. He'll rue it some of these days, it's my opinion. Perhaps it will give you some idea of my delicate health, (though without any regular disorder,) when I tell you that Mr. Curtis sees me every day.

Compliments to Mr. Wellford, &c.

Your affectionate sister,

HANNAH PARKINSON.

Mr. Wellford had more than one sly laugh over

this letter. "But really," interposed his sweet-tempered wife, "poor Hannah is very much to be pitied."

"For having five thousand a-year, my dear, or for having an apothecary that comes to see her every day? Which?"

"Oh! really now, Harry, you are too severe. It *is* a misfortune for weak persons to have a medical man who persuades them they cannot do without him. Poor Hannah seems to be in very ill health—"

"Though 'without any regular disorder,' my dear; remember the parenthesis."

"And then Mr. Parkinson's being so deaf—"

"Obliges his wife to wear out her lungs in screaming to him!—

> "'You are so *very* deaf, my dear!
> What shall I do to make you hear?'"

"Ha, ha, ha!—It is too bad of you, Mr. Wellford, to make me laugh. But, my dear, about the important part of this letter——"

"Ay, Mrs. Wellford, about the consignment of one of your fair daughters! Well, my dear?"

"Well, my dear!"

The vicar drummed on the table. His wife looked very melancholy.

"As to parting with our Hannah," said she after a pause, "that is, as my sister says, quite out of the question. I could not possibly bear the separation; nor is she the sort of girl to be happy from home."

"Besides, my dear, Hannah relieves you from so many little fatigues, that I look upon her as quite necessary for your comfort, in the present state of your health. Nor should I know what to do without my young companion. It is one of my most exquisite pleasures to watch the developement of her mind and assist in its culture."

"Rosina is too young to be removed from a mother's eye."

"And too noisy to please a formal, fidgetty aunt. Besides, I cannot lose my little romp."

"It will be much too hard a trial for us to part with either of our girls. To be sure, if my sister only wanted one of them for a month or so, we might bear the pain of the separation for the sake of affording pleasure, of which, poor thing, with all her fortune, she does not seem to have much at

present;—but, for an indefinite time! There, you see, is the rub."

At the word rub, Mr. Wellford began to rub his knee somewhat uneasily; and after a meditation of full five minutes, he re-commenced the subject with "The question in the present case, my dear Kate, ought not so much to be what is most agreeable to our own inclinations as what will be for the future advantage of the children. So long as I am spared to you, my income is sufficient for our moderate wants: but on my death I shall be able to leave you but a poor two hundred a-year, which will scarcely suffice for your own maintenance and that of our girls, while Matt and Harry will need some friend to help them in struggling through the world. Shall we then be quite justified in repelling the advances of a near relation who has it in her power, should the time of need arrive, to prove so valuable a friend to your children?"

"Oh, Henry," said Mrs. Wellford sighing, "you have placed the subject in so grave a point of view!"

"And does not the establishment of a child

require grave consideration?" asked her husband.

"At any rate," rejoined she after sorrowfully ruminating, "it must not be Hannah."

"Well then, let it be Rosina," he replied. "They are equally dear to us, but Rosina is stout and healthy, and well able to make her way in the world. Shall I write to Mrs. Parkinson?"

"No, my dear, there is no hurry. I will write by and by, or perhaps to-morrow, which will be quite soon enough."

"Quite, quite, my dear love, and I am glad to be excused from the task, as I must go to see poor Betty Wilson, who is extremely ill."

Mrs. Wellford scarcely heard his parting words, but a moment after he had quitted the house, she recovered from her reverie, and desired one of her little boys to run after his papa and inquire whether he meant to drink tea at Mr. Greenway's that evening. Her sister's letter had made her forget the invitation.

Harry scampered back with an answer in the affirmative, and Mrs. Wellford was soon intent on household cares.

CHAPTER II.

DOMESTIC DISTRESSES.

THE letter which was to decide the fate of Rosina Wellford was not written for some time. Mr. Wellford on the day following the discussion with his wife, had a feverish attack, of which he at first made light, but which became sufficiently serious to confine him to the house. On the second day of his illness, he grew so much worse that Mrs. Wellford was alarmed and sent for Mr. Good, who no sooner beheld his patient than he pronounced his fever to have been caught of Betty Wilson, and advised Mrs. Wellford to send her children instantly beyond the reach of infection, offering to receive them beneath his own roof. She thankfully accepted the proposal. Hannah, however, now about thirteen years of age, earnestly implored leave to remain as assistant nurse. She

had been in her father's room, she said, the whole of the preceding day, had often held his fevered hand in hers and felt his breath on her cheek; therefore in all probability had either taken the infection already or was not liable to it. Mrs. Wellford consented, and the affectionate girl took her place at her father's bedside, held the cooling draught to his lips and pressed his burning forehead with her soft, cool hand. When, after a delirious night, he for a short time recovered his senses, he seemed uneasy at her presence, and asked why she was allowed to incur so much danger; but her gentle answer satisfied him, and he soon was again insensible to any thing that passed around him. Poor Mrs. Wellford, beholding the rapid progress of the disorder, was so bewildered by grief as to be scarcely capable of acting rationally; while Hannah, pale as death, but perfectly collected, moved to and fro with noiseless steps, fumigated the room, administered the medicines, and impatiently followed every direction which Mr. Good had given her mother in her hearing. It was strange and beautiful to see so young a girl made regardless of her own danger by intense affection, and preserving through the

very intensity of that affection, the self-possession which enabled her to controul her tears and perform every necessary office with the steadiness of an indifferent person. On the third day, Mr. Wellford breathed his last. He became sensible a short time before his decease, murmured blessings on his wife and daughter, and expired in their arms. Hannah, whom the experience of a few days seemed to have matured into excellence, would now have abandoned herself to the wildest grief, had she not been awed into the restraint of her feelings by the speechless agony of her mother. All the simple arts of affection were used by her to rouse Mrs. Wellford from the stupor of despair; and when the unhappy widow at length burst into tears, Hannah found relief in sobbing on her bosom.

The loss of such a husband and father as Mr. Wellford, was irreparable: if sympathy could have healed the affliction of his family, their tears would soon have been wiped away, for every one loved and pitied them. It was soon necessary to leave the vicarage to make way for Mr. Wellford's successor; and as Mrs. Wellford had no wish to quit the neighbourhood, she took a large cottage in

good repair on the skirts of Summerfield, the low rent of which was proportioned to her diminished means. It stood at the extremity of a pleasant lane in the valley behind the church, and was capable of being made a pretty residence under judicious direction. The grief and the bustle of moving being once over, every thing in their new home tended to subdue the sorrow of the widow and orphans to that tone of quiet regret which we would not, if we could, dismiss from our hearts after the loss of an estimable object. A few days after their establishment, the new vicar arrived, a Mr. Russell, whom every body was sure beforehand, they should dislike. This being the case, no wonder that many invidious comparisons were drawn, the first Sunday, between him and Mr. Wellford. Mr. Greenway thought his sermon too flowery; Mr. Good too argumentative; while Miss Margaret Holland pronounced it a quarter of an hour too long; and Farmer Holland declared nothing but curiosity had prevented his falling asleep. Phœbe Holland had some hopes of his proving a marrying man in more senses than one; and from deciding at the first glance that he was "at least thirty,—oh, certainly, thirty or more," she gra-

dually made more and more allowance for a staid turn of countenance, and set him down for six or seven and twenty. His person was pleasing, his manners gentlemanly and quiet. Every one soon liked him "very well," except the young Wellfords, and perhaps their mother.

CHAPTER III.

THE VICAR'S MENAGE.

WHEN Lady Worral heard that Mrs. Wellford had taken John Pearce's cottage at the end of the blackthorn lane, she remarked that she feared the poor woman would find her less neighbourly than formerly, for that the hill, though very easy to come down, was mighty hard for her to climb up again. Perhaps Mrs. Wellford might have already derived a momentary satisfaction from the idea that this would be the case, though we will not suppose her to have chosen an abode in the valley for the express purpose of freeing herself from an interfering patroness; and indeed, fourteen years of intimacy had so habituated her to the old lady's ways that she was not so sensible in this instance, as many women might have been, of "the gain of a loss."

Curiosity induced Lady Worral to brave the

is out of employ yet? Mr. Russell asked if I could recommend him a gardener, for he said he could not bear that a spot which bore the marks of *feminine* care should run to waste. I told him Mr. Wellford always managed his garden himself; but he said he had not a turn for hoeing and raking, and hardly knew a cabbage from a cauliflower: so then I recommended old Joe Harrison, and said if he had him twice a week, that would be *quite* enough. I asked him if he meant to marry, at which he laughed and said no, he was a confirmed old bachelor. I said that was lucky, for that unless he stuck up to you, who were too old, or your daughter, who was too young, there was no choice for him, except among the Hollands, who, between ourselves, are too flighty. Besides, who are they? Quite below him in birth, any way; so that really—ha, ha,—if he ever *should* take matrimony into his head, I think his best chance would be with you, and then you know you could all go back to the vicarage."

"Oh pray, pray, Lady Worral, if you have the smallest regard for my feelings, never——"

"Well, well, I won't; I was only in joke, but I see you are not able to bear that yet; and, se-

riously speaking, he *is* much too young for you, for I asked him his age, and he said six and twenty. He looks more, and so I told him."

If Mr. Russell had been desirous of ingratiating himself with Mrs. Wellford, he might with reason have exclaimed, "Save me from my friends." Certainly, with the most candid of dispositions, and every wish to do him justice, Mrs. Wellford's dread of seeing him, and antipathy to the mention of his name, were doubly increased by Lady Worral's injudicious eulogiums, at the expense, as it were, of the dead; and more especially by her acknowledgment of having jokingly alluded to Mr. Russell of the possibility that the dead should ever be forgotten. The ensuing Sunday was looked forward to with pain: before it arrived, however, the new vicar thought proper to pay his respects at the White Cottage, and in spite of Mrs. Wellford's many prejudices against him, she felt her dislike thaw away under the influence of his mild, pleasing manners. He entered easily into conversation, spoke of their mutual friend Dr. Pennington, and of Stoke Barton rectory, which, it seemed, he had lately visited; praised the "bowery scenery" of Summerfield, then went on

with English scenery in general, and compared it to that of Portugal, where he said he had spent the preceding winter with a beloved sister. Mrs. Wellford, noticing an expression of melancholy in his tone, enquired whether ill health had been the motive of the journey. "Yes," he said, "his sister had been in a decline, and a milder air had been recommended; but not even Cintra could save her. He was left alone in the world."

Mr. Russell then cleared his throat, and spoke of the noise, filth, and discomfort of Lisbon. There was nothing to make it desirable for an invalid, he observed, except the air. Were he in ill health, he should prefer taking his chance at home. Abruptly quitting the subject, he noticed the pretty view of the church from the parlour window, and asked Hannah whether she did not think it would make a good sketch, and whether she drew. He then spoke of the lower order of his parishioners, and made several inquiries of Mrs. Wellford respecting their characters and wants. Mr. Russell had too much tact to hint how sorry, he was sure, she must have been to have quitted the vicarage, but he expressed his delight at the beauty and neatness of his new

residence, which he said he should have pride in preserving in its present tasteful order; offered to take Rosina on his knee, for which he was rewarded with a push, and asked Hannah for one of her clove pinks, which were finer than any in his own garden.

"I think, mamma," said Hannah timidly when their visitor was gone, "Mr. Russell seems a person whom we shall learn to like in time. At first I was almost sorry, and, I am afraid, rather envious when I heard people praise him — it seemed as if they were robbing papa of his rights. But now I begin to feel that we should be thankful he has been succeeded by some one who can appreciate the good he did among the poor, and carry on his plans. How much more painful would it have been if a red-faced, hunting, sporting clergyman had been sent to us, like the rector at Heeley!"

"I dare say you are right, my dear," said her mother with a sigh.

Mr. Russell's character was in fact of a higher class than that of his amiable predecessor. With fewer shining qualities than Mr. Wellford, he possessed greater grasp of mind. He had fewer

accomplishments, less *taking* manners, but stronger sense. He appealed seldomer to the passions and more to the understanding. To one accustomed to the sunshiny hilarity of Mr. Wellford's countenance and manner, Mr. Russell, especially while still suffering from a domestic calamity, necessarily appeared grave and reserved. His disposition was excellent, yet where Mr. Wellford would have acted from the spontaneous impulse of the heart, Mr. Russell often acted from principle. Mr. Wellford's disposition was essentially social; he had no higher enjoyment than that of conversing with his wife, his children, and his parishioners. Mr. Russell had greater sources of happiness within himself. It sometimes cost him an effort to lay down a favourite author and visit a sick cottager; but the volume *was* always closed and the peasant always visited; and the consequent glow of self-approbation amply repaid the exertion of rousing himself from luxurious indolence.

Mrs. Parkinson, who had written more than one condoling letter to her sister, now re-urged her sending one of the girls to Park Place. Mrs. Wellford's spirits became very low at the thought of parting with any of the dear members of her

diminished circle, and she long endured all the discomfort of irresolution; but recalling to mind her last conversation with her husband to whose sentiments and wishes she now attached a species of sacredness, she at length made up her mind to part with her little Rosina, and wrote the tardy answer to her sister's invitation. With fond self-deception, she avoided fixing any specific time, taking advantage of such phrases as "the next opportunity," "a trusty escort;" &c.; but Mr. and Mrs. Good being summoned to London by the death of a relation that very week, they offered to deposit the little girl at Stoke Barton in their way, and the proposal was too unexceptionable to be refused. The suddenness of the resolution prevented much time for regret; Rosina was in high spirits to the last moment, and it was not till the windows were drawn up and the stage whisked through Summerfield, that the luckless little damsel began to roar at the top of her lungs.

Without minutely describing the adventures of a heroine in her eighth year, during the course of a forty miles' progress over a Macadamized road, it may be necessary to state that the evening of the same day saw her safely consigned to a pow-

dered footman at the lodge of Park Place. Rosina, with silent awe accompanied him to the house, beneath the portico of which stood a middle-aged gentleman who honoured her with a kiss, saying "So you are my little niece, are you? I am sure you seem a very nice little maid." Thence she was conducted to the drawing-room, where sat Mrs. Parkinson and old Mrs. Diana. She was welcomed by the former with a delight such as a child might display at the acquirement of a new toy.

"And how is your mamma, love?" cried the lady, untying her niece's bonnet—"Lord, what a fine child! do look at her, aunt Diana."

Rosina was indeed well worth looking at. Her auburn locks, let them be combed or brushed which way they might, persisted in resolving themselves into spiral ringlets; her large laughing eyes were brilliant hazel, and her cheeks of the colour and softness of a peach. Mrs. Parkinson smothered her with kisses, and Mrs. Diana observed that she was "an uncommon fine child indeed."

This evening, every body was pleasant and pleased. The next was not quite so agreeable.

Rosina had been noisy all day, and in the afternoon had enticed her uncle to swing her in the garden. Mrs. Parkinson fretful at being deprived of a plaything of which she was nevertheless already becoming tired, summoned them in-doors: they returned in high spirits and renewed the romp in the drawing-room, and then she began to be jealous that Rosina, whom she had *got for herself*, should so visibly prefer the company of the gentleman. She declared she could bear such a noise no longer, so Miss Rosina was sent to bed.

After she was gone, Mr. Parkinson sat down, took up a newspaper which he had read before, and commenced the following dialogue with his wife.

"Well, my dear, how did Mr. Curtis find you to-day?"

"He said, Mr. Parkinson, that I've a great deal of feverish heat about me, and am far from well."

"So far well. I am glad to hear it."

"Glad to hear what, Mr. Parkinson?" (raising her voice and speaking distinctly,) "He says I'm *far from well*."

"Oh, far from well—that alters the case; I'm sorry to hear it."

"I don't think you care much about it."

"What a sturdy little thing that Rosina is! it is astonishing what strength she puts out."

"That's no answer, Mr. Parkinson, to my observation."

"What observation, my dear? I did not hear you make any."

"No, I dare say not. Such a fine uproar as you have been making ever since tea! It would be just the same, I dare say, if I were dead."

"Deaf, my dear? No such thing."

"Dear me, Mr. Parkinson, who said you were? I said *dead*, not deaf."

"Oh! was it so? My dear, I am thinking that if you took as much pains to pronounce your consonants as your vowels, I should hear you perfectly well. You have got into rather an indistinct way of speaking, the last year or two."

"Well, I never——! To lay the fault of your hardness of hearing to my articulation!"

"My dear, I hear Rosina perfectly well."

"Yes, because she halloos."

"It does not appear so to me."

"Because you 're deaf!"

"I'm sure her voice went through my head this evening," observed Mrs. Diana.

"Oh, and mine too. She's very lovely, certainly, but no one would take her for a gentleman's child. It will be the ruin of her if we continue to let her go on as she has done to-day. I must endeavour to bring her into some sort of order."

This was spoken in Mrs. Parkinson's ordinary tone of voice; and drawing her chair towards Mrs. Diana, she left her husband to enjoy his deafness and his newspaper together.

"Should not you call on Mrs. Pennington soon?" said Mrs. Diana.

"Yes, I think I ought, though I've a good mind to punish her for her abominable haughty independent manner, by staying away a little longer. What a terribly large family that is! To be sure the Doctor has a handsome income, but I can hardly imagine how he will provide for them all."

"Oh! the eldest son and daughter are settled."

"Yes, but then there are the two next girls nearly ready to come out, who most likely will

not marry so well as Mrs. Ponsonby. Then there are Lewis and Marianne. I'm sure their father would do much better to send them to good schools than to bring them up at home, for they are very noisy, unformed young people. But there's so much talk of their superior education; and, when one goes there, one hears so much about experiments and air pumps and electrical machines, that it makes one quite sick. There did not use to be any of this nonsense when I was a girl. It was but last week the Doctor let them send up a fire balloon. I told him I thought it was very dangerous."

"Ah, they'll repent it some of these days," said Mrs. Diana.

"So *I* say," rejoined Mrs. Parkinson. "But, dear me, did you hear Mr. Curtis's story of Major Webster, that used to dine here in my father's time, dropping down dead? It was very shocking, really. He was not older than Mr. Parkinson, and much the same sort of looking man, of a full habit and florid complexion. I should not be surprised at his going off in the same way some of these days, for he has a great many of the symp-

toms Mr. Curtis mentioned, and so I said to Mr. Curtis; and he said if any thing of that kind *should* ever occur, the best thing would be——"

"For him to marry my widow," said Mr. Parkinson in his usual quiet voice.

"La! Mr. Parkinson," cried his wife, looking vexed and confused, "who would have thought of your hearing what we were talking about?"

"What *you* were talking about, my dear, you mean; for I did not perceive aunt Diana's lips in motion."

"Well, all I know, is," said Mrs. Parkinson, "that it's very disagreeable to live with a person that sometimes is deaf and sometimes is not."

"My dear, the fault is not in my deafness, which is never so great as you will persist in maintaining it is, but in your having got such a habit of speaking in a shrill key that you don't know when you are making use of it."

"*I* speak in a shrill key? Why, not long ago, you accused me of muttering."

"Only of speaking indistinctly, my love, which prevents my benefiting by your agreeable conversation, and then you fancy I am deaf."

"Well, there really is no pleasing you, one way or the other," cried Mrs. Parkinson very crossly, and retreating with a bed candlestick as she spoke; "I think, deaf or not deaf, you are enough to tire the patience of Job!"

CHAPTER IV.

ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE.

THERE being no necessity for minutely tracing little Rosina Wellford's history during her abode at Park Place, it need merely be stated that Mrs. Parkinson soon discovered her grievous mistake in supposing she could learn to be fond of children, and that the system of management pursued by her was such as to have a ruinous effect on her protegée's temper and happiness. Injudicious indulgence was shortly followed by injudicious severity, or rather by a course of petty thwartings and teazings as difficult to bear as the tyrannical exercise of power on a larger scale. One circumstance, indeed, ameliorated Rosina's fate. Mrs. Parkinson, flimsily educated and without taste or talent for communicating or acquiring knowledge, was ill qualified to teach her charge more than she knew already; and a temporary illness in-

duced her to accept Mrs. Pennington's friendly proposal that the little girl should be sent to the rectory every morning to take her lessons with Lewis and Marianne. Mrs. Pennington made the offer, in fact, more in compassion to the niece than the aunt; but Mrs. Parkinson found herself so much the gainer by three hours' daily quiet, that though she jealously commanded Rosina to return *the instant* lessons were over, she allowed the plan to be pursued after the ostensible motive for its adoption had ceased, satisfying her pride and her conscience by the reflection that it was no great favour from the Penningtons after all, as Mr. Wellford had been the Doctor's second cousin. Rosina regularly poured forth her woes in confidence to her sympathizing young companions, who deeply resented her wrongs, and looked upon Mrs. Parkinson as the greatest tyrant that ever lived. Commiseration, however, though it alleviated, could not heal her childish griefs; as she increased in years and understanding, her dependent situation, instead of growing more endurable from habit, became more intolerable. A warm heart, warm temper, and quick apprehension, gave keener edge to the sarcasms which Mrs.

Parkinson when in an ill temper, (and that was sometimes seven days in a week,) levelled at her mother and family—sarcasms, much harder to bear than the restraint on her activity and noisy spirits, which had formerly called forth her childish tears. There were other methods of making her feel dependent and degraded. Every year Mrs. Parkinson now made a point of sending her sister a silk gown; no very great gift, certainly, considering the affluence of her own circumstances; but unceasing as were the allusions ostentatiously made in all companies to this annual present! "Ah! that is a pretty sarcenet of yours, Mrs. Pennington; just the colour of the last I sent poor sister Wellford—no, I think her's was more of a slate—she has not long been out of mourning, you know, and in *her* circumstances, it's best to have something that will hide the dirt. I didn't buy her a figured one, because a plain silk will turn. I dare say she'll make it last" (in a confidential tone) "till I send her another. I wish I could do more, but you know I have this girl to keep." —"Mrs. Jones, may I trouble you for a pin? Ah, your pin cushion is off the same piece as a gown I bought yesterday for Mrs. Wellford, I do

believe! You got the silk at Mr. Price's, I dare say; ah, yes, four and threepence a yard, the very same." It was almost as intolerable to be pointed out to every morning caller as "one of poor sister Kate's children. A terrible large family!—left *quite* unprovided, so that she took her entirely out of charity." Poor Rosina learnt "how salt is the savour of another person's bread, and how hard it is to climb another person's stairs." Often the burning tears moistened her daily portion of needlework; and often they wetted her sleepless pillow as she lay thinking of the home, despised, as it seemed, by all others, but dear beyond measure to her who had been sent from it to prove the wretchedness of splendid dependence. Not unfrequently she was deprived of her only consolation, the society of the young Penningtons, till she had humbled herself for some real or imaginary fault, which, to a temper like hers, was gall and wormwood. Rosina attained her twelfth year, and her disposition appeared to be growing reckless and sullen. Her letters to her mother were always submitted to the censorship of Mrs. Parkinson, whose temper was not ameliorated by time, while Mr. Parkinson was

of too passive a nature to attempt interference; and Mrs. Diana, if not so cross, was even more formal and fidgetty than her niece. Affairs at length came to a crisis. Rosina took an extraordinary resolution and acted upon it. She ran away!

Her aider and abettor in this daring step was Lewis Pennington. He it was who, fired by the recital of her wrongs at a moment when her heart was full almost to bursting, declared that if he were in her place, he would endure such tyranny no longer, shewed the feasibility of a return to Summerfield, lent her a guinea to pay her coach hire, hailed the stage as it passed the shrubbery gate, saw her safely placed in it, wished her good luck and called out "all right." *He* returned to the rectory with the bold confidence of a boy of fifteen, not without a spice of mischief in his composition, and ready to endure whatever punishment might await him for having freed innocence from thraldom; while Rosina, terrified almost out of her senses at the hardihood of the enterprize, yet trembling with delight at her emancipation, shrank into one of the corners of the stage as it passed the lodge of Park Place, and turned pale with alarm

when it drew up at the inn to receive parcels and passengers. The door was abruptly opened, and she started, with the apprehensiveness of guilt, in the expectation of seeing some member of her uncle's household; but it was only the coachman, who jerked in a brown paper parcel and then remounted his box. They clattered over the bridge which separated Stoke Barton from the adjoining parish; trees, houses, and steeples faded in the distance; and the agitated girl began to hope that now, unless some very cross accident indeed should happen, she was beyond the reach of pursuit; but there was still sufficient uncertainty hanging over her fate to prevent her feeling comfortable. The possibility of her mother's displeasure haunted her mind, and by the time she had reached Summerfield, this source of apprehension had worked her up to such a state of agitation that, on entering the room where Mrs. Wellford and Hannah sat at tea, she could only reply to their eager and anxious inquiries by a torrent of tears. When at length she could speak articulately, she gave an account of all her grievances, the recapitulation of which again choked her utterance, and she murmured an almost inau-

dible request that her mother would not send her again to Park Place.

"To Park Place?" repeated Mrs. Wellford, whose cheek glowed with a hectic colour, "No, Rosina, did I even wish it, there is no likelihood that your aunt would receive you again. The doors of *that* house we may consider as closed against us for ever. You have certainly acted daringly and imprudently in taking so important a step as quitttng a home in which your friends had placed you; however, that is past now and cannot be recalled. You have, I fear, been injudiciously treated, and now that we are once more united, no consideration on earth shall tempt me to consent to a second separation. It has been painful enough to both of us."

Tears fell from the mother's eyes, as she stooped to kiss Rosina's cheek. "I hope your future conduct will prove to me," said she, "that what has passed has been more attributable to adverse circumstances, and your aunt's imperfect knowledge of the management of children, than to the hastiness of your own temper."

Rosina sighed, and secretly resolved that whatever the faults of that temper had hitherto

been, they should be seen no more; and now that the dreaded explanation had taken place, and she was received into favour, she had leisure to kiss Hannah again, and observe with wonder how much she was grown and improved.

Hannah was at this time between sixteen and seventeen; and like Thomson's rural heroine,—

"Thoughtless of beauty, she was Beauty's self."

It might be said of her features that they reminded you of the Grecian contour, though not strictly conformable to it; and they completely harmonized with the calm, pure, and chastened spirit that shone through them. Her countenance, if seldom radiant with vivacity, was generally smiling and tranquil; and her dark blue eyes, if they did not sparkle with genius, at least beamed with intelligence and sweetness.

Hannah was as much struck with Rosina's growth as Rosina was with Hannah's beauty; and now that "the absent had returned, the long, long lost was found," there was much to be told and enquired into on both sides. Rosina enjoyed the consciousness of being once more at home, though every thing looked very small to her, and

her spirits rapidly rose, albeit her mirth was rather hysterical. She ran into the kitchen to see her old favourite, Betty; and Betty nearly recalled her lachrymose propensities by enquiring "how in the world she came from Park Place;" but the choking in her throat soon subsided, and before her gossip was half at an end, she was called off by the sound of her brother Matthew's voice. Matthew, now a fine boy of fifteen, was serving his time with Mr. Good, under whose roof he lived, though he ran down to the White Cottage whenever he had an opportunity. He welcomed his younger sister with noisy joy, was inquisitive into the story of her wrongs, indignant at Mrs. Parkinson's ill usage, and pitied her so much that Rosina went to bed impressed with the pleasing conviction that she had been a heroine in distress. Mrs. Wellford saw the mischievous tendency of Matthew's commendations, and was sorry for it; but was more indignant at her sister's conduct than in Rosina's presence she had thought fit to express.

In the course of the following morning, Rosina ran in from the garden, exclaiming "That tiresome Mr. Russell is coming down the hill!"

"Tiresome!" repeated Hannah with surprise, "nobody thinks Mr. Russell tiresome now."

"Dear me!" cried Rosina, "why none of us could bear him when I went away."

"True, my dear," said her mother, "but that was because we did not know him. Mr. Russell is an excellent young man, and does great good among the poor."

"He may be very excellent," said Rosina, "but I'm sure he is not very young. However, here he comes."

Mr. Russell entered with several books under his arm. "Well, Hannah," said he, smiling, "here is Hayley's Life of Cowper for you at last. Good morning to you, Mrs. Wellford. Ah, Rosina, how do you do?"

All were surprised at the quietness of this last salutation. "Are you not astonished," said Mrs. Wellford, "to see Rosina among us once more?"

"No," said he, "I was astonished to *hear* of it; but news travels fast in country villages. Matthew looked in upon me on his return to Mr. Good's, and communicated the intelligence."

"She did not follow quite the usual routine

observed by young ladies in setting out on their travels," said Mrs. Wellford.

"So I hear," returned Mr. Russell, looking gravely at Rosina, who felt rather abashed. After enquiring for his friends the Penningtons, he proceeded to talk about books, and one Abel Trueman, a village prodigy, who had made some astonishing discoveries in mechanics; to the surprise and mortification of Rosina, who had expected him to shew some curiosity respecting her adventures. She thought him a more disagreeable person than ever, and wondered how Hannah could read his stupid books.

In the afternoon, a furious letter came from Mrs. Parkinson, accusing both Rosina and her mother of meanness, insolence, and ingratitude, saying that all Stoke Barton was crying out at Rosina's unheard of conduct, and that the young Penningtons were in high disgrace for having connived at her absconding. She added that this was the last time she would hold any communication with a branch of her family so wholly undeserving of her patronage.

Mrs. Wellford burnt the letter without shewing it to her daughters, merely telling them that their

aunt Parkinson, as might naturally have been expected, was exceedingly angry.

Every one being now thoroughly well informed that Miss Rosina Wellford had run away from Park Place and returned to Summerfield, she soon sank into the insignificance of a little girl of twelve years old, and quietly resumed her usual employments. In the course of a week, she received a letter from Marianne Pennington, in answer to one which her mother had allowed her to send in a parcel, remitting a guinea to Lewis. Marianne hoped she was well and had found her mamma and sister so likewise, and stated that both she and Lewis had been in sad disgrace, but were now forgiven. The rest of the epistle was about birds, flowers, and the French governess Mademoiselle Mackau. Thenceforward, as neither of the young friends had much money to expend in postage, the correspondence was renewed only at distant intervals.

CHAPTER V.

FEMALE ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

It is sometimes possible to run away from a bad habit. An individual who in some particular circumstances is conscious he has deserved the reprehension of his acquaintance, has the power and often the inclination, on entering a new society, of commencing a reformation without the annoyance of its being generally known that reform is needed. He turns over a new leaf—in short, with a *volti subito*. This was partly the case of Rosina, who, conscious of her faults of temper, resolved that they should never betray her now that she was once more in her dear home where every one was kind and good humoured. The acting on this prudent determination, together with her mother's gentle system of management and the infrequency of temptation, effected a considerable improvement,

though her faults were yet far from being eradicated. Inconsideration both in speaking and acting was the failing which oftenest required her mother's correction; and, next to this, a want of application to any pursuit when it ceased to be amusing.

Rosina had been so well grounded in the elements of many feminine accomplishments by the Penningtons' Parisian governess, that it only required her own diligence to attain excellence in almost any pursuit she chose to undertake; and Mrs. Wellford was very anxious that she should adhere to the plans already commenced with so much success. Rosina's *style* in every thing she undertook bore an accurate likeness to her own disposition. Her handwriting, for instance, was more free than is usual at her age, but wanting in neatness. Her drawings were bold, sketchy, and incorrect. She would often cover a sheet of paper with odd groups of knights errant, ladies, pages, squires, and long robed signors, which reminded one of Cervantes, or Ariosto, or Spenser's Fairy Queen, and which excited wonderful admiration and pleasure in the mother and sister; but on examination it was generally found that one had no

neck, another's head was twisted hind part before, arms and legs were put on where they were never known to grow, some were standing in the air, and others so aslant that it was impossible they should keep their balance—faults by no means uncommon in the hit-or-miss school. On their being pointed out by the matter of fact critics, Rosina generally observed that "it was much easier to give advice than to mend;" an undeniable fact;—and that "she was tired just then, but would correct the faults another time;" which time never came. With respect to music, again, Rosina had a sweet voice, quick finger and excellent ear, and could play off any easy piece at sight; but her execution wanted finish. At Summerfield, indeed, she had not much opportunity of keeping up her practice; for she had left all her music behind, and the only instrument in the house was an old square piano-forte, which her father had bought, years ago, for fifteen pounds at a sale. On this divine instrument Rosina flourished over all the lessons she could recollect in the absence of her notes; and if she stuck in the middle of a troublesome variation, she changed the key, and went off to something else;

till she was completely tired of all her old tunes. Lady Worral then lent her half a dozen heavy volumes of Handel, Gluck, Piccini, &c., half of which were unintelligible, being printed in score. Mrs. Good also rummaged out some reels and country dances and a collection of Vauxhall songs; but even with the free use of these, Rosina's music soon came to a stand.

Hannah had no claim to the title of "an accomplished young person." Music she had never had an opportunity of learning, and she had a taste, rather than a genius for drawing. She was fond of botany, and sometimes endeavoured to copy the outline of a flower in pencil; but her attempts, though neat, were cramped. Her hand was not what artists call "sufficiently untied." But in the culture of her garden-flowers, in long rambles among the green bowery lanes and over the spirit-reviving heath, in needlework and in reading, Hannah found sufficient resources without the assistance of music or painting. Her threaded steel was remarkably felicitous in its execution of

> "buds, and leaves, and sprigs,
> Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn;"

and her delicate hemstitch and satinstitch formed the only ornament of her neat and simple dress. Poetry was a source of keen enjoyment to her; not indeed the love-rapine-and-murder school, of which no specimens had come to her knowledge, but the descriptive, contemplative, and moralizing class of writers, among whom may be instanced, as two of her bosom favourites, Thomson and Cowper. She had also enough mind to understand and delight in Milton. At first her reading was confined to the often turned over volumes of her father's moderate collection; but in after-times, Mr. Russell, whose study shelves were amply furnished with standard works, and who subscribed moreover to a town library, continually supplied her with a change of useful and amusing literature. Hannah understood French perfectly when she read it to herself, but having principally learnt it *by sight*, was diffident of her accent. Rosina, on the contrary, had always had a mortal aversion to grammars, French or English; but her excellent ear had enabled her completely to catch the Parisian pronunciation of Mademoiselle Mackau, who had insisted on French being invariably spoken in school hours. She therefore

gladly abandoned her needlework to read Voltaire's Charles XII. and Pierre le Grand to Hannah every afternoon, as long as they lasted.

In so confined a neighbourhood as Summerfield, of course there was not much change of society; but in the small round of visits which were periodically exchanged, Mrs. Wellford was always accompanied by her daughters. Lady Worral loved a game at whist, and generally invited the Goods and Mrs. Wellford every week or ten days to make up a rubber. On these occasions Mr. Russell, though he never played cards, sometimes looked in and chatted with the girls at their work, or challenged one of them to a game of chess. Mrs. Good and Mrs. Greenway also, had little tea-parties, which sometimes concluded with a dance; and at Farmer Holland's there were famous syllabubs out of doors in the summer, and all sorts of noisy Christmas games in the winter. Such was the *gaiety* of which Hannah and Rosina partook; and in the daily exercise of their domestic occupations, months and years followed each other, productive of much peaceful enjoyment and leaving little mark behind, while the future promised to be as much like the past as possible. Nobody

seemed to alter or grow much older, except the young; there were few deaths and fewer marriages. Mrs. Wellford at forty was as clear and delicate looking as she had been ten years before, and Lady Worral seemed to wear as well as her everlasting brown satin pelisse. The three Miss Hollands, who had formerly been *village belles*, were still single, and had gradually become stout, buxom, middle-aged women, retaining all the good humour and hilarity of their youth. There seemed every prospect of the two Miss Wellfords likewise spending their existence in single blessedness; a prospect which Hannah, at the calm age of two and twenty, contemplated with the most perfect composure, though Rosina, on the borders of seventeen, considered the subject with rather more impatience. Frequent consultations with her looking-glass, which told her that she was an extremely pretty girl, had awakened in her a certain portion of vanity. This had as yet little opportunity of displaying itself, save in the somewhat self-complacent expression of her countenance, and the janty way of putting on her bonnet; though in after times it involved more serious results. She was devotedly attached to Hannah,

and now and then fretted herself a little that so much beauty and sweetness should be wasted on the desert air; but in vain she invoked the heroes of ancient and modern romance, for, like Glendower's spirits, they did not come when she did call for them. At one time, from the frequency of Mr. Russell's visits, she really began to suspect him of intending to make Hannah an offer, on which she immediately discovered him to be endowed with a thousand good qualities to which she had heretofore been blind. He was not so very old, after all, and certainly not at all old bachelorish in his ways! But the offer was not made, and Rosina wondered how she could have changed her opinion of him, for he was just the same prosy good sort of a man as ever. Then he began to pay Rosina more attention than formerly, seemed suddenly aware that the "young lady" was rising into the "young woman," took the liberty of telling her of a few of her faults, at first playfully, then seriously; was evidently much gratified by her improving on some of his hints, and vexed and even cross at her slighting his advice on some other points. What could all this interest in her character mean? He had become

such an habitual visitor at the White Cottage, that it was looked on as something remarkable if two days passed without seeing him. Was it possible that Rosina could be the attraction? That was too ridiculous;—yet it was better, at least more entertaining, for a man to be even ridiculous than merely solemnly stupid. There would be some *eclât* in refusing him; all the village would know it, and be astonished at her, and pity him. Nay, the poor man was so amiable that she really believed she should pity him herself. Poor Mr. Russell!

However, poor Mr. Russell continued to eat, drink, and sleep as well as usual, quite unconscious of the bold step that was expected from him; and Rosina felt half ashamed of herself for having indulged in such silly and improbable speculations. It was plain that he was in love with neither of them; most probably he had been disappointed in early life. There was no one else whom even her fertile fancy could convert into a hero. An old college friend, indeed, of Mr. Russell's, one Dr. Black, was occasionally known to be at the vicarage, and he even drank tea at Lady

Worral's and Mrs. Wellford's, but this man Rosina particularly detested. It was to no purpose that Mr. Russell bespoke favour for him on the score of his amiability, his deep learning, and varied powers of mind—he had a grating voice, a figure not unlike that of Dr. Syntax, a pair of legs in every body's way; he dissolved nine lumps of sugar in every cup of tea, played with keys, scissars, or whatever lay within his reach while speaking, and sometimes, in his fits of abstraction, dropped the aforesaid keys or scissars into his immense pocket. It was impossible to endure Dr. Black. Then, the Hollands were visited by occasional troops of odd looking cousins from London, whose manners even Rosina's inexperience knew to be underbred; and Mr. Good had two nephews in the next market town, one articled to a solicitor, the other an usher in a public school, who dined with him every Sunday, and as often on week days as he thought proper to invite them. Sam, the articled clerk, was pert and disagreeable; Edwin, the usher, pale and pragmatical. Neither could, by any stretch of fancy, be coaxed into heroes, though they did

tolerably well for partners in an occasional dance. So with the conviction that in due time, she and Hannah would add two to the much abused sisterhood of old maids, Miss Rosina Wellford was obliged to remain contented.

CHAPTER VI.

A BACHELOR'S TEA TABLE.

MAN is an ambulatory animal. He walks to and fro, whether to digest his thoughts or his dinner, either in his study, in his garden, on his terrace, or wheresoever fate is kind enough to afford him room for stretching his legs. The Greeks and Romans were luxurious people. They had actual ambulatories built of marble, sheltered from the weather, and adorned with pillars and statues.

The Reverend William Russell was not so well off—his library was fourteen feet by sixteen, without deducting for the bookcases; and five strides brought him from one extremity to the other, even if he took the diagonal of the square. So he bought himself a library chair; and when his thoughts required shaking, he stepped out into the churchyard, where there was a lime-tree walk.

Summerfield church, it either has or ought to

have been stated, stood on the brow of a hill. When Mr. Russell passed through the little garden gate which opened into the church-yard, he might, if he turned to the right, behold a very pleasing prospect. Towards the east was seen the steep straggling street which composed the village, a confused and picturesque mixture of white-washed and red-brick tenements, projecting gable-ends and tall chimney-stacks, beneath elm, poplar, and horse-chesnut trees; Lady Worral's grounds rising immediately behind, and in the extreme distance, a range of chalk hills, at the foot of which ran the high road.

Yet towards this view, pretty as it was in itself, Mr. Russell seldom turned when leisure allowed him to choose between his right hand and his left. On the south side of the church-yard lay his favourite gravel walk shaded by limes, where he could digest the secondlys and thirdlys of his sermon, or pause to gaze in pleased reverie on the scene below. The valley on this side was deeper than that towards the village, and completely shut in by a chain of hills. The scenery was essentially rural, not a single habitation being in sight, though the smoke from Mrs. Wellford's

chimneys rose from behind a clump of trees. The valley was intersected by a stream, and chiefly used for pasture. In one spot, therefore, might be seen a Cuyp-like group of cows either grazing or standing mid-leg in the water, while at a little distance, a snow-white flock of sheep cropped the grass: and the milkmaid's call and the shepherd boy's whistle were in perfect harmony with the accessories of the picture. Occasionally too, Hannah might be seen watering the flowers in the neat garden, which, though closely hedged, was from the height on which the churchyard stood, completely overlooked; and in the perfect stillness which reigned around might even be heard the distant tones of Rosina's girlish voice as she sat at her work beneath the walnut tree.

Such was the scene which Mr. Russell loved full well to contemplate, and which, one fine July evening, after some hours of close study, he stepped forth to enjoy. The valley was in all its beauty; the sun threw its slanting beams on the varied green of the foliage and the rich purple of the distance; the milkmaid in her red petticoat and white apron, was driving home her cows and singing as she went, the shepherd-boy

was peeling a willow wand and whistling loud and clear; "the insect world were on the wing" and the air was loaded with happy sounds of life. Hannah too, in her white gown, was sitting beneath the walnut-tree, apparently sympathizing with the feelings which made Dr. Paley exclaim "It *is* a happy world after all!" and Mr. Russell's eyes, after taking the circuit of the valley, were gradually returning to dwell on its gentle heroine, when he became aware that another was also drinking in its beauties.

On a grassy bank at a short distance from the church-yard and rather below it, commanding a view of Mrs. Wellford's cottage as well as of the surrounding country, sat a young man very intently engaged in drawing what was probably a sketch of the scene before him, as he frequently regarded it attentively for a few minutes and then resumed his occupation. The bold, rapid motion of his hand and arm conveyed the idea of a masterly touch, yet he seemed dissatisfied with his success, for he now and then paused, shook his head, and wistfully reconsidered the prospect. Mr. Russell, who was unable to see his face, judged him from his figure and occupation to be a

stranger; and after watching his movements a little while with considerable interest, had enough of the Paul Pry in his composition to open the gate and walk towards him: perhaps he thought it might be Turner or Glover. As he approached from behind, the young stranger all at once gave up his attempt, changed his position to one of entire unconstraint, and threw his sketch-book on the grass, so that Mr. Russell nearly stumbled over it. Footsteps, and a little exclamation scarcely amounting to a word, made the artist aware of his vicinity; he started from his luxurious half-recumbent position, and stretched out his arm to remove the impediment with a good-natured "I beg your pardon."

"No pardon is necessary, sir—Allow me—" said Mr. Russell, stooping to assist him to collect numerous little scraps of paper which fluttered from the leaves of the sketch-book, some of which he honourably took pains not to see were poetry.

"Pray do not trouble yourself, sir—I am an awkward fellow," said the stranger, scrambling together the fugitive pieces.—"I am infinitely obliged to you"—as the last of the covey, evidently a fine drawing, was restored by Mr. Russell.

"I wish," said the vicar smiling, "I could be bold enough to hope that my little service might be rewarded by a sight of the tantalizing waif I have had the pleasure of restoring."

The young man gave him a good-humoured but searching look with a pair of brilliant black eyes. "Oh, certainly, if you wish it," returned he, after bestowing a second glance on his drawing—"You guess it, I suppose, to be a view of the valley before us. You are welcome to see the sketch, though I fancy it is very different from what you expect to find it."

Mr. Russell eagerly examined the drawing which was held out to him; and to his great surprise, beheld not only a view of the scenery immediately surrounding the White Cottage, but Hannah herself seated on her garden-chair beneath the tree. A few clever touches had given the easy outline of her figure and the general form of her simple drapery; and imagination easily supplied the profile of the sweet and thoughtful face resting on her hand, beneath the graceful braiding of her light brown hair.

"That figure *comes in* well, I think?" said the artist interrogatively.

Mr. Russell looked at it long and intently; at length he replied with an accent of much pleasure, "Yes, she *comes in well*, as you say. You have caught the lady's resemblance, sir, even better than that of the scenery; and I may say in the words of Milton,

'Much I the place admire; the person more.'

Your representation of place and person, I mean. It is excellent."

"Odd enough," cried the young man with a delighted look, "that the same, or nearly the same passage should have occurred to both of us! It was but a minute ago that I was silently applying to myself the beautiful simile which immediately follows the line you have just quoted. You doubtless remember it?"

Mr. Russell looked as if he did *not* remember it; and the artist with at least as much energy as the occasion required, repeated the following lines——

"'As one who long in populous city pent
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing, on a summer's day; to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,

Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound,—
If chance with nymph-like step fair maiden pass,
What pleasing seemed, through her now pleases more;
She most, and in her look sums all delight.'"

"Imagine, sir," continued the enthusiastic speaker, after having very pleasingly enunciated this difficult passage,—"Imagine, sir, the force with which these lines must be felt by a man passionately fond of nature in all her varied forms, compelled by his profession to pass half the year in the feverish excitement and pestiferous atmosphere of London, and who, escaping at length from his bondage, plunges into the country and comes all at once on such a scene as this!"

"It must indeed be delightful," said Mr. Russell.

"It is almost intoxicating!" exclaimed the stranger, who paused, apparently inclined to laugh at his own warmth of expression. He tied the strings of his portfolio, and added in a more temperate tone, "I assure you that when I sprang off the coach-box half an hour ago, and strolled into the churchyard to look about me while the horses were changing, the view, which unexpectedly presented itself, filled me with such delight

that no words could have given expression to my feelings. Being without aim or object, except to find subjects for my pencil, I hurried back to the inn, took my portmanteau from the stage, and resolved to remain here till I had exhausted the resources of the neighbourhood. Perhaps you, who appear a resident in this part of the world, can tell me how soon that period is likely to arrive."

"We have abundance of fine scenery around us," said Mr. Russell, "and I think it will be some time before you will complain of want of materials for your pencil. Meanwhile, if my services are worth acceptance as a cicerone"—

"Thank you," replied his new acquaintance, "I shall gladly avail myself of your kindness. I am, as you may have guessed from my sketching, an artist."

"From the *excellence* of your sketching," said Mr. Russell. "May I have the pleasure of knowing——?"

"Huntley, sir," said the young man, a second time forestalling him—"My name is Huntley. You may probably have seen my father's name in the papers, some years ago—an officer who dis-

tinguished himself in the American war. He has long been dead."

Mr. Russell did not recollect the name of Captain Huntley, till the stranger reminded him of some striking circumstances which instantly brought to his memory that officer's unavailing bravery and melancholy death. Pleased with the rencontre, and with the naïveté which had led the young artist to speak thus unreservedly of himself and his connections, he invited him to drink tea at the vicarage.

The invitation was accepted as frankly as it was given. Mr. Huntley put his portfolio under his arm, and before he turned away, gave a parting look at Mrs. Wellford's cottage. "That is a pretty little place," said he—"I can hardly tell what to make of it. In spite of its roses, hollyhocks, and garden-seats, I should set it down for the tenement of some small farmer, or bettermost sort of labourer; and yet the lady—"

"*Is* a lady, I assure you," said Mr. Russell; "that cottage is inhabited by the widow and orphans of an excellent man who was my predecessor in the vicarage."

"Indeed!" cried Mr. Huntley—"Have I then been sketching a lovely young Lavinia?

> "'She with her widowed mother, feeble, old,
> And poor, lived in a cottage far retired.—'"

"No! Miss Wellford's mother is still a pretty woman, and neither in ill health, neglected, nor sunk in poverty."

Mr. Huntley laughed, and followed his new acquaintance to the vicarage. "This is more like an adventure," cried he with animation, "than one often meets with in these steam-engine days, when minds and roads are equally Macadamized."

On entering Mr. Russell's parlour, his quick eye instantly glanced round to discover whether it were decorated by any specimens of art. A little miniature of Fanny Russell, the young woman who had died at Cintra, a fine engraving from Da Vinci's Last Supper, and another of the Madonna della Seggiola, were all that met his view. The new publications which lay on the window-seat afforded a more fertile subject of conversation, and by the time Mr. Russell had manufactured his bachelor's essence, the two ac-

quaintance seemed to understand each other's minds as well as if they had been intimate for years. They trod the classic field together, and discussed men, morals, and manners. Thence they diverged to the arts. Huntley asked his new friend if he had seen the last Exhibition.

"No," said Mr. Russell. "Strange as it may seem to you, during the ten years I have held this vicarage, I have only visited London three times, and always on business."

"That does seem strange.—How a man with talents and tastes such as appear to be yours should be content to vegetate in a country place like this, pretty as it is, seems hardly so extraordinary as,—pardon me,—that in such a confined neighbourhood you should preserve such freshness and vigour of mind. How have you prevented your colloquial powers from rusting?"

"Nay, sir, you compliment—it is likely enough that they *have* a little rust: a country parson has too many allurements to slovenly indolence to be always proof against temptation; yet strange to say, though self-indulgence generally grows upon us, I am far less insensible to the claims and

pleasures of society than I was some years ago. When I first came here, I had a morbid delight in solitude; it was the greatest of luxuries to me to shut myself up with my books, and to brood over them and my own melancholy speculations. Death had recently broken up the beloved circle which in old times had gathered round my father's hearth. However, I convinced myself at length that this yielding to regret was not only weak but inexcusable; I looked abroad among my flock, and found many members of it more companionable than I had at first supposed. Few of them are very refined, I grant—but when we take to study human nature as a science, all varieties of it have something interesting or entertaining."

"As have all varieties of the human countenance," said Huntley. "I never saw a face yet, however vulgar or ordinary, the study of which might not benefit a painter."

"Pray, Mr. Huntley, do you make landscape or figures your study?"

"Oh, I belong to the historico-picturesque school. That may be termed, you know, the melo-drama of painting. Nothing comes amiss to

me—houses, men, women, children, animals, old ruins, shattered trees, gipsy tents, antique furniture,—all turn to account in some way or other."

"You speak very enthusiastically of your profession."

"Is it not a profession, to demand enthusiasm? Only think of the stores of mind and memory that must be brought to it, if we would pursue it with a hope of success; only think of the manner in which it clarifies the vision to every thing that is grand and beautiful! A painter must have all the knowledge of history and anatomy that books and professors can teach, together with an originality of combination, (for invention is nothing more,) that can never be taught; he must understand moral as well as physical anatomy—I mean the different forms in which passions express themselves, so as to be able to represent human beings under their influence. What laborious thought and practice this supposes! And when labour has won the victory, there remains the business of hiding the traces of that labour—the raking over the ploughed clods, to make all look finished and even. What says Tasso?

'L'arte che tutto fa, nulla si scopre.'

Is not enthusiasm necessary to carry a man through all this? Talking of the anatomy of the mind, what incomparable opportunities, sir, must your Roman Catholic brethren have of attaining a knowledge of it through the medium of confession! What must it be to see man's heart laid bare to the view! to hear all the impulses and suggestions that led to crime described with the eloquence of remorse!—Pretty young penitents, on the other hand, showing their purity of mind by their contrition for some venial fault—some harmless piece of coquetry, or trick played on the old duenna!—Truly, it would be amusing enough to have a week's play at father confessor."

"Taking his own fasts and penances into consideration?"

"Why yes, I think so.—He quits his hard pallet before daybreak, with less reluctance, of course, than if it were of eider-down, joins a procession of his brethren, which, if he have the smallest taste for the picturesque, must be very gratifying to his imagination, accompanies them to a splendid chapel, hears a mass of the most divine music, adores some master-piece of Raffaelle or Correggio, then retires again to his cell

to whip himself with a small knotty cord, which is the least agreeable part of the business, I grant, though it must be remembered that the degree of severity with which he inflicts the stripes is entirely optional; and some, we may guess, wield the scourge with considerable gentleness. Then comes his breakfast! A glorious one, nine times out of ten, it is, and even if it be a fast day, one may have something worse than fish. After breakfast, he and a brother monk take a walk; and if we may judge from Pinelli's etchings, they do not object to stop before a puppet-show, a saltarello, or whatever amusement may be going on. They say "benedicite" to every pretty contadina, come home to a second mass, carry the host, perhaps, to some dying sinner in a marble palace, dine, and sing mass again. Then, for his afternoon amusement, our monk steps into his confessional, where a second Schedoni possibly comes to afford him ten times the excitement of Mrs. Radcliffe's best novel, or without being a second Theodosius, his vanity is gratified by the confessions of a Constantia."

"Still, Mr. Huntley, custom——"

"Oh sir, your servant!—I only said for a week."

A pause now ensued, such as the most clever and talkative cannot always prevent; which was broken by Mr. Russell's asking Huntley whether he were acquainted with a young painter, a kinsman of his, by name Frank Russell.

"Do I know honest Frank?" cried Huntley gaily—"Frank Russell, the most industrious of punsters, the idlest of students, the prince of good fellows? Not to know him would argue myself unknown. He is to be found, manufacturing mirth in every studio."

"Your description of him is likely enough to be exact," said Mr. Russell, "and accounts, I am afraid, for his not making any very rapid advance in the arts."

"I will tell you the secret of Frank's slow progress, sir. He does not want talent, but he is in too easy circumstances. He wants poverty, to make him a good painter. Nothing like a little starvation, or the dread of it, to spur genius. So long as he does not depend on the sale of his pictures for his daily bread, he will not care that no one offers to buy them. He only puts his hands in his pockets and laughs. Tell him that he has committed some egregious fault in drawing, and he replies that it does not signify. He copies well.

He makes a fine show at the British Gallery, where he generally chooses some picture that has plenty of background. Background is his *forte*—a Rembrandt with only a nose and a triangular piece of cheek standing out from a mass of black, suits him exactly. He once set about an original historical composition on a large scale. So sanguine was he of success that before the group was half painted in, he bought an expensive frame for it. Afterwards, he became dissatisfied with his work, thought it too diffused, painted out the subordinate figures, and contracted the principal mass till nothing but a little island of light remained. On this his vast ocean of background gradually encroached till the little island was finally swallowed up, and nothing but a large mass of blackness was left. Meanwhile, Frank had invited some professional friends to sup with him, so nothing else would suit the whimsical fellow than to mount this total eclipse without sun or moon into his magnificent frame. Every one, of course, no sooner saw it than they were convulsed with laughter; and their mirth was increased by his gravely telling them that it was an allegorical piece, representing the moral darkness

of the Gentile world. He placed it in the same class with Correggio's 'Notte.' Poor Frank! notwithstanding his weakness for backgrounds, he is a very talented, as well as gentlemanly fellow—every body likes him; and there is more beneath the surface than many suppose. Though the waves are frothy, the ocean is deep."

Before Mr. Russell and his new acquaintance parted for the night, an arrangement was made for their visiting the remains of an old monastery at a few miles' distance on the following day. The appointment was kept; the weather, the scenery, and the associations connected with monastic ruins conspired to kindle Huntley's enthusiasm and render him a more agreeable companion than before. They again met in the evening, and drank their coffee at the large lattice window of Mr. Russell's study, through the open casement of which came the mingled perfume of sweet-briar and mignionette.

"I like the air of this old vicarage exceedingly," said Mr. Huntley. "Though not positively picturesque in itself, it becomes so from the scenery in which it is embowered, and the graceful mantle of trailing plants flung over it."

"The vicarage owes the latter attraction," said Mr. Russell, "to those who were prevented from reaping the reward of its beauty. Mrs. and Miss Wellford planted the clematis and sweetbriar just before I came to enjoy the improvements which resulted from their taste."

"Miss Wellford?" repeated Huntley. "That was the young lady we met to-day in the lane."

"No, her elder sister. When I first came here and saw so many minute evidences of care and orderly arrangement on every side, I could hardly help considering myself a supplanter; and felt something like remorse when I beheld an orphan family thrust into a cottage scarcely superior to that of a common labourer, that I, a single man, might sit down surrounded by superfluity of room."

"That must have been a painful feeling to a generous mind. But are the family you speak of reconciled to the change in their situation?"

"Completely, I believe, so far as pecuniary circumstances are concerned. Their tastes, refined and yet simple, are fully satisfied; and the universal rush and struggle for wealth and luxury is never more surprising to me than when I have

just been witnessing how much happiness is compatible with an income as limited as theirs. Mrs. Wellford has always preserved the respect that was originally her due as the vicar's wife; and, from my being unmarried, has never had occasion to relinquish the duties of that station. She is a very charming woman."

"Tastes refined and yet simple?" repeated Mr. Huntley, after musing on the vicar's description. "How seldom they are to be found! I should be curious to see union of refinement and simplicity."

"Come," said Mr. Russell with more than usual alertness, "what say you to a visit to the White Cottage? I should like to shew you that the union does not exist merely in my own fancy. You robbed the Miss Wellfords of their guest last night, so it is but fair that this evening they should have two."

"With all my heart," said Huntley, quitting his seat with alacrity. They accordingly left the vicarage together.

CHAPTER VII.

AN A. R. A.

Rosina, in her morning walk, had encountered Mr. Russell and Mr. Huntley. The former, without offering to introduce his companion, had merely smiled and said, "good morning, Rosina;" leaving her to marvel exceedingly as she proceeded down the lane, who the intelligent looking young man could be by whom he was accompanied. She had heard of a Mr. Frank Russell, and of a younger brother of Dr. Black's. But there was as much dissimilarity between Mr. Russell's old crony and this young unknown as between black and white. She was sorry she had on her old bonnet, and on her return home related to her mother and sister what she persisted in calling "the adventure."

"Really, Rosina," said Hannah, much amused, "I cannot call your passing Mr. Russell and pro-

bably some cousin or college friend of his, much of an adventure."

"You may laugh," said Rosina, "but seldom as we see a new face in Summerfield, it *is* a kind of adventure nevertheless."

In the evening, as she was reading beneath her favourite walnut tree, Rosina heard animated voices in the lane, and recognized the tones of Mr. Russell. Guessing that he was coming to call on her mother, accompanied by his unknown friend, she started up without exactly knowing why, and leaving her book on the seat, ran into the house. In another minute she perceived through the parlour casement that the two gentlemen were actually in the garden, and communicated the remarkable intelligence to her mother and sister, feeling very thankful that she had put on her jaconet frock instead of her cambric-muslin.

As they passed the garden seat, Huntley pointed to the book Rosina had forsaken in her flight, and which had a sprig of myrtle between its leaves; saying with something of Charles Kemble's expression in Hamlet,—

"'Do you see nothing there?'"

"Yes, indeed do I," cried Mr. Russell, taking up the volume, "I see my Greenfield's Essays lying out of doors exposed to the chance of bad weather or theft, for which I shall take the liberty of scolding Miss Rosina."

Accordingly he entered the parlour with the accusing witness in his hand, exclaiming, "So, Rosina, this is the way you treat my books!" Huntley's introduction then took place, and while Mrs. Wellford was receiving his prefatory remarks on the weather and the scenery very politely, Mr. Russell found an opportunity of whispering to Hannah, "A young artist,—a surprising genius with whom I fell in yesterday by chance. I know little of him except that he is well acquainted with a cousin of mine, and has evidently had the education of a gentleman; but I think you will find him quite a *rara avis*."

Hannah looked towards the stranger with interest and curiosity. At the same time, Mr. Huntley turning to address himself to her, gave Mr. Russell an opportunity of which he presently availed himself, of repeating nearly the same *aside* to Mrs. Wellford.

"What an enchanting spot" began Huntley,

" you have chosen for your delightful retirement! Here you seem to have every thing around you which the poets tell us is necessary or accessory to perfect happiness. 'Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books.' And I may add music, may not I? You have an instrument, I perceive."

" I neither sing nor play," replied Hannah, " but my sister does both."

" She has a charming resource then. I can hardly imagine how ladies fill up their time without music. But perhaps you pursue the sister art? You are fond of painting?"

" Very fond of looking at drawings," said Hannah, " but unfortunately I have no genius, and never made a tolerable drawing in my life. My sister draws, however——"

" How much she is to be envied for having two such delightful talents! Music and painting are twin sisters and ought never to be separated. But is it possible you admire both these fascinating arts, yet have made no efforts in either? I fancy the denial is owing to your modesty—or perhaps poetry is your engrossing study?"

Rosina's wondering eyes turned from the smiling proposer of these sifting questions, whom she

could hardly tell whether to believe an actual quizzer or not, to her sister, who replied with perfect simplicity,—

"Yes, I am very fond of poetry, though I hope I do not allow it to become my engrossing pursuit."

"Pursuit! oh then, you write!——"

"Oh, dear, no!"

"Nor your sister?" inquired he, looking archly towards Rosina, who with a little colour and a little laugh, replied in the negative.

"After all," said Mr. Huntley, "we must allow fine taste to be the most attractive attribute in a woman. Genius implies a more masculine grasp of mind, and is hardly suitable to the delicacy of the sex. They sink under it, like Erminia beneath the sparkling armour of Clorinda. Now and then we find a lady strong enough to poise the heavy lance of the amazon, but such a phenomenon is uncommon and perhaps not very pleasing—and yours is the sex, you know, '*né pour plaire.*'"

"No," said Rosina, "we are of

'the sex whom man was born to please.'"

"But does not one quotation contradict the

other, Rosina?" interposed Mr. Russell. "For my own part, I believe that the most important business both of men and women is to please."

"Indeed!" cried Rosina with surprise, "I should never have suspected *you* of thinking so."

"Yes, Rosina, the grand, the important business is to please. The only question on which people split is, whom are they to please? Some say, themselves, you know; others, the world; others are old fashioned enough to say—their Maker."

"I might have guessed a moral was coming," said Rosina smiling, "though I acknowledge that it is a very good one. But surely, Mr. Huntley, you are rather severe towards us poor ladies, in denying that we can possess the smallest particle of genius without becoming disagreeable."

"No, no," he replied, "I did not deny that. No, I love and admire every indication of talent in women; but the most attractive *degree* of it is perhaps what Marmontel happily calls 'ce *demi-talent* qui sollicite l' indulgence, et qui'—stay, I hope memory will not play me false,—'qui, obtenant de l' estime et se passant de gloire, amuse les loisirs d' une modeste solitude.'"

"That is a very beautiful quotation," said Mrs. Wellford.

"Yes," said Mr. Russell, "and it completely embodies my ideas of what feminine accomplishments ought to be; it denotes the subjection in which they should be kept to higher pursuits, to render them harmless or even pleasing. However, I must do you, Rosina, the justice to acknowledge that without being disagreeable, you have more than a *demi-talent* for drawing."

"Indeed?" cried Huntley, assuming an air of such perplexity that Hannah and Rosina could not refrain from smiling,—"Where am *I* then, what will become of me, after all the treason I have been uttering?"

"You must recant," said Mr. Russell.

"Ay, so that you will but dictate the form," returned Huntley, "but who will ensure the acceptance of my recantation? I have involved myself in an awkward scrape. There is one hope left.—Perhaps you deceive yourself, Mr. Russell, or wilfully deceive me in saying that this young lady really has more than a demi-talent for drawing. Pray help me out of my difficulty," added he, turning to Rosina, "by shewing me your port-

folio, that I may satisfy myself you draw very badly."

Rosina laughed, but shook her head. Huntley was not discouraged, and after some general discussion of the news of the day, renewed the attack.

"Are you quite resolved not to make me easy?"

"Yes, indeed."

"I see you are very implacable. I dare say you will never forget what I said about demi-talent."

"No, I dare say not."

"Are there no hopes for me, even of distant forgiveness?"

"Oh, forgive and forget are different things."

"Yes, but like hare and currant-jelly, they usually go together. I am afraid I am a lost man. My case is quite hopeless. If you felt the least relenting, you would not refuse me a little specimen, if it were but a mere sketch.—So trivial a favour—"

"And yet is it worth so much asking?"

"A slight one for you to grant, but a great one for me to receive. I wish your sister would intercede for me—"

"Oh, it would make no difference."

"What! are you so little accustomed to grant her requests? Are you on such bad terms with each other? How people may be misled by countenances! To think that the minds of two such apparently amiable young ladies should be occupied by the evil passions of hatred, envy, and malignity, or at best by freezing indifference!"

Rosina laughed again, and thought Mr. Huntley very odd. He afterwards turned to reply to an observation of Mrs. Wellford, and remained for some time unusually silent, apparently listening to her dialogue with Mr. Russell, but actually occupied in admiring the delicate tints of Hannah's complexion, and considering with what colours it could be imitated. It seemed to him the very complexion which Sir Joshua Reynolds had attempted to describe when he desired his pupils to "think of a pearl and a peach." It was neither red nor white, but composed of a gradation of hues more beautiful than either. Wishing at length to induce her to speak, he re-commenced the subject of his dialogue with Rosina.

"May I ask, in what style your sister draws?"

"In all styles, I think," said Hannah.

"Indeed!"

"That is—I hardly know what you mean by a style—whether the word applies to the subject or the manner of treating it.—She draws any thing that strikes her in reading, or that she sees in her walks."

"That is no common talent."

"How can you have the perversity, Rosina," cried Mr. Russell, "to let Mr. Huntley fish by the hour together with the industry of an Isaac Walton, without having to boast of so much as a nibble? Drawings are meant to be shewn, as bread is meant to be eaten. Come, let me add my entreaties to his, that you will favour us with a sight of your portfolio.—I am very much mistaken if Mr. Huntley will not take the liberty which I sometimes take, of telling you of a few of your faults—if you give him encouragement."

"Which *you* never require," said Rosina, laughing. "Well—my poor little portfolio shall be untied, though it contains nothing worth seeing."

And with a mixture of dread and self-complacence, she spread her little collection before the artist. Huntley was surprised to see, instead of the formal, mounted copies which are usually found

in young ladies' drawing-books, a variety of original designs, some on scraps of card or drawing-paper, some on letter backs, varying in their degrees of merit, full of faults, but displaying considerable power of imagination and freedom of execution.

"Here is no half-talent," said he, as he turned over the contents of the portfolio, "here is real genius, even though it be uncultivated. May I criticise freely?"

"Certainly," said Rosina.

"My daughter will be grateful to you, Mr. Huntley," said Mrs. Wellford.

"Well then," he resumed, "to begin with this little group, which seems, from the quotation beneath it, to represent the arrest of Mary, Queen of Scots."

And he pointed out its merits and defects, shewing what she must avoid and *how* she must avoid; with many striking illustrations of the precepts he was instilling. The whole of his little lecture contained such evidence of talent and good sense that Mr. Russell and Mrs. Wellford clearly saw that he was master of his subject. To elucidate some position he was laying down, Mr. Huntley produced what he called his pocket album, a

little volume scarcely exceeding a memorandum-book in size, and neatly fastened with a button and string. Here were many first-thoughts hastily jotted down, odd physiognomies caught in the streets and in stage-coaches, picturesque fragments of various kinds, and several musical airs written out on fairy-like lines. Rosina's eye was caught by these miniature songs, and as the book was freely handed from one to another, she asked permission to examine Mr. Huntley's little selection of music. He immediately offered to lend it to her.

"Most of these songs are Italian, I see," said Rosina, "that is a language of which unfortunately I know nothing."

"You will like that little air of Paesiello's, however," said Huntley, "even if you content yourself with merely playing it."

"Les us hear the air, Rosina," said Mr. Russell.

She was sure she should find it too difficult; but Huntley had moved a chair towards the pianoforte, and raised the music-desk. The first trial was not quite successful. Mr. Huntley hummed the song to set her right. The second time it was better played, and every one admired it. Mr.

Huntley pleaded, however, for a little more expression, and Mrs. Wellford asking whether he could not sing, he laughed and said "Oh no!" Notwithstanding which, he immediately accompanied Rosina with a balmy, penetrating voice, such as she had never heard before. Hannah looked expressively at her mother, and Mr. Russell began, for the first time, to believe in stories of universal geniuses.

"It is sweet, but monotonous," said Huntley abruptly turning from the piano.

"Very sweet," said Mrs. Wellford.

"And yet, as you observe, Mr. Huntley," continued Mr. Russell, "the air *is* monotonous. Now, an idea strikes me,—I dare say I am wrong, for I know nothing of music—not so much as the difference between A sharp and B flat."

"I should wonder if you did," thought Rosina.

"But," he continued, "it seems to me that monotonous music, when sung by a fine rich voice, has a deeper effect on the mind than music which has more variety."

"Undoubtedly it has," said Huntley, "on a mind which is either wholly without cultivation, or which has arrived at the highest pitch of refine-

ment. The untutored ear can relish none but simple melodies: when the ear begins to be cultivated, it also becomes vitiated, and takes pleasure in variety and apparent difficulty. It must even be kept from satiety by discords. As we go on, the taste refines itself, and we reach our original love of simplicity—we find we have travelled in a circle, and that when we fancied ourselves farthest from ignorance, we were at exactly the same distance from perfection. It is the same with every thing—dress, eating, books, manners, habits of life. The coquette comes back to her white gown, the epicure to his boiled chicken, the man of fortune to his cottage. We take great trouble to acquire factitious tastes and then have to unlearn them."

While Rosina was considering how much of this was true, and how much new, she found that her mother's guests were taking leave. Much pathos was there in her farewell curtsey to Mr. Huntley, and very sorry was she to receive his parting bow. As soon as he was fairly gone, her raptures clothed themselves in words.

"My dear mamma! My dear Hannah! Did you ever know such a charming person? Did you

ever meet with such a universal genius? Such an enchanting voice, and such wit, and such eyes!"

"Softly, softly, Rosina, unless you would have us think, that, like King Lear, 'your wits begin to unsettle.'"

"But seriously, mamma, did you ever know any body at all to compare with this Mr. Huntley?"

"Yes, my dear."

"Ah, you are thinking of poor papa. But you, Hannah, you who are impartial, do not you think of him as I do?"

"He seems very clever indeed," said Hannah, "though I cannot go so far with you as to admire his eyes. He looks one out of countenance."

"Oh, my dear, that was only the natural consequence of his admiring you so much. I like him the better for it—"

"What! for looking people out of countenance?"

"No, mamma, for admiring Hannah. You know he paints portraits, and portrait painters are obliged to study people's faces so constantly, that it must necessarily become a habit. *I* did not observe that he looked any one out of countenance. Well!—I must say I am surprised at

you both. I thought you seemed so delighted with him."

"My dear Rosina, because we steady old ones cannot quite keep pace with your raptures, there is no reason why you should set us down as insensible to the merits of your hero. His conversation was amusing, his singing delightful, and his manners quite superior for a drawing-master."

"A drawing-master! my dear mother, what are you saying? Mr. Huntley is no drawing-master; Mr. Russell says he is a first-rate artist, a Royal Academician or Associate, I forget which—I dare say he would be quite affronted at any one's offering to engage him as a teacher."

"Though he offered to teach you gratis. Ah, Rosina! the case is plain. You are kindred souls, and have mutually fallen over head and ears into love, at first sight."

"Oh, I am not to be laughed out of my opinion in that way; nor need you, Miss Hannah, look so provokingly arch. I shall be grateful to Mr. Russell as long as I live, for having introduced such a charming acquaintance to us. Ah! here is his dear little book, I declare! I did not think it had been left behind. I shall carry

it up stairs with me, out of Betty's reach, and I wish you two insensible ladies a very good night, which I have no doubt you will enjoy. No drowsy indifference for me!"

The following day, Rosina was trying over Mr. Huntley's songs, admiring his sketches, and correcting her drawings according to the advice he had given her, till dinner-time. More than once she went to the window, and looked up the lane to see if *any body* were walking down it; but was disappointed, for Mr. Russell had carried Huntley to a beautiful view six miles off. In the afternoon, Rosina declared she must walk to Heeley to buy some new bonnet-ribbons, for her old trimmings were quite shabby, and she tried to persuade Hannah that her's were the same. Hannah was not to be convinced against the evidence of her own eyes, though, as her sister was bent on making the purchase, she consented to accompany her, notwithstanding the heat of the weather. Along two miles of the dusty, shadeless high road, therefore, they proceeded; the patient Hannah making no complaints; and on their arrival at the little shop, they had the gratification of finding the services of all the shopmen bespoken by their Saturday

customers. Hannah was glad to rest herself on the summit of one of the high stools which had often excited her sister's ridicule; while Rosina, less tired, or not choosing to own it, had the pleasure of receiving a smirking bow from Edwin Good, as he passed with a file of schoolboys, trying to look as if he were independent of them. The blue ribbon was at length bought, and also a pretty pair of French gloves, which Hannah in her own mind set down to *the Huntley account;* but she made no remark, and they toiled home, looking, as their mother told them with a smile, "very unbecomingly hot." To Rosina's prodigious vexation, she learnt that Mr. Huntley had called in their absence, not even Mrs. Wellford having been at home. The walk had given Hannah a head-ache, and she sat languidly turning over the leaves of a book at the open window, while Rosina, her whole soul intent on the new trimming of her bonnet, was snipping, pinning, and placing, and lamenting that she had not bought another half yard.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SUDDEN CONVERT.

SUNDAY morning arose clear and bright, and Rosina, nicely dressed, accompanied her mother and sister to church with feelings of great complacence. She could not help stealing a furtive glance around, to see in whose pew Mr. Huntley might be sitting; but no Mr. Huntley was to be seen, a circumstance not inimical to her devotion. After service, Matthew ran to divide his mother and eldest sister, and accompany them down the lane; and Sam Good, in the glory of a new blue coat with bright metal buttons and a primrose waist coat, walked by the side of Rosina, flourishing his cane, drawing up his pert little figure, and observing that the weather was "uncommonly charming." He came on Matthew's invitation, to lunch at the White Cottage; and then, to Rosina's relief, they set forth on a walk.

There was a poor lame boy, named Henry Neale, who lived in a small cottage on the chalk hills which bounded the valley opposite to the church, to whom, as he was unable to attend the service, Hannah always went to read for half an hour before dinner on Sundays. Thither she was now accompanied by Rosina, and as they were proceeding down the lane, Mr. Huntley crossed a stile which brought him immediately in their path. He looked pleased at the rencontre, bowed, hoped Mrs. Wellford was quite well, and took the same direction as that which they were keeping.

"I have had a delightful morning," said he, "on these downs!"

"You were not at church then?" said Hannah.

"No. That was very wicked of me, was it not?" said Mr. Huntley, laughing, and looking at her as if he did not expect to be judged very severely. "I have been lying under a venerable tree, Miss Wellford,—listening to the harmony of the birds and the distant tolling of the village bell, and watching the various picturesque groups of peasantry as they crossed the hills. How much more enjoyable is a Sunday in the country than in London! There you are jostled by strings of

elaborately dressed, unintellectual looking people, pouring from churches and chapels, or nearly run over by cockneys in their one-horse chaises, setting out on expeditions to Highgate or Hampstead."

"You speak of meeting the congregations face to face, Mr. Huntley," said Hannah. "Are we to understand, then, that you do not add one to their number?"

"That is a very satirical inference," he replied, smiling. "Oh, I assure you, I go to church—sometimes. However, I will acknowledge that my attendance might be more regular. But shall I also own to you that the green hills and the clear blue vault of heaven form, in my humble opinion, a fitter temple for the worship of their Maker than the most gorgeous building which man can raise?"

Hannah looked at him in quiet surprise.

"I am an idle fellow, and talk a great deal of nonsense, I dare say; but there is to me so much of formality, of mind-crushing repetition, in the prescribed service, so much of the tiresome or ridiculous in the manner in which it is usually performed, as to deaden, or at any rate, interrupt feelings of devotion. A liturgy is a good thing; an established liturgy there ought to be; I agree

with you there—those that have no ideas of their own to express, must have words put into their mouths—but the helps which are given to sluggish piety are inefficient, and real piety wants none. A miserable chorus of charity children, often a droning preacher, always a bad clerk, are the chosen substitutes for the majestic trains of priests and melodious choirs who presided over the worship of the ancients. Surely," continued he more earnestly, and stooping as he spoke, to gather a tuft of flowers, " more real advantage may be derived from moralizing over one of these campanulas which spring beneath our feet, than in drowsily listening to one of those well-paid gentlemen who

> —— ' reading what they never wrote,
> Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
> And with a well-bred whisper close the scene ! ' "

" You should hear Mr. Russell ! " said Hannah with energy.

" Yes, he is a man of talent, and doubtless preaches well; but will you not allow that, in general, my idea is correct ? "

" I—I dare say that the study of the cam-

panula may awaken some very good feelings, but——"

"But what?"

"Should we *rest* there? That does not amount, does it, to more than the religion of nature?"

"Well!"

Hannah paused, and Huntley for a moment looked triumphant.

"Well!" repeated he, "what have you to say against the religion of Nature?"

"Nothing *against* it—only that there are six days in the week on which we may study campanulas; the seventh requires—something more."

"You are right," said Mr. Huntley, looking pleased; and after a short pause, he added, "I like to hear women plead for religion as if it were something intimately connected with themselves."

They had now reached Henry Neale's cottage; and Rosina, who had attentively listened to the dialogue between her sister and their new acquaintance, opened the garden gate.

"You are bound on some errand of charity, I suppose," said Mr. Huntley, as he glanced at the mean exterior of the cottage,—"Well, Miss Wellford, I am a thorough convert. You may believe

me, I assure you. See! here goes the campanula! And this afternoon, I shall make a point of hearing your Mr. Russell."

"Every body's Mr. Russell," said Hannah.

"Nay, the pronoun was plural, and embraced the whole parish. Till I have the honour, Miss Wellford, of a more intimate acquaintance, the monosyllable *you* must occasionally comprise all Summerfield, while *we* stands for the busy world of London, with myself as one of its inhabitants."

Mr. Huntley bowed respectfully and gracefully, and passed on. "What a study she would make!" thought he. "If I could but persuade her to give me a few sittings!—"

CHAPTER IX.

A VILLAGE SOIRE'E.

"GIRLS," said Lady Worral, entering Mrs. Wellford's parlour the following morning, "I'm come to tell you,—oh, my poor breath! When shall I get it again? This nasty hill of your's—I wish to goodness you'd stayed at the vicarage!"

"What was your Ladyship going to tell us?" inquired Rosina, as soon as their visitor appeared in a speaking condition.

"That you and your mother must come and drink tea with me to-night, for the Goods have promised me, and moreover they are going to bring Matthew; and there'll be Margaret and Phœbe Holland. Bessy can't be spared, on account of her father's rheumatism. But I've a stranger coming, whose name I shan't tell you beforehand."

"Oh! how can your ladyship be so cruel? Won't you even say whether it is a gentleman or a lady?"

"No, no, no, not a word. Perhaps it's the Mrs. Barker you've heard me talk so often about, and perhaps it's my nephew, the captain—perhaps it's neither. Heyday, Rosina, what are you doing with that bonnet? Untrimming it again? *I* took notice of your new ribbons yesterday, I assure you. You have cut the strings too short in allowing too much for the bow, but that can't be helped now—you will only make matters worse. Satin ribbon always frays; and why could not you have bought white, to be like your sister?"

"Oh, I don't see why sisters should always dress alike, especially when they have different complexions. White suits Hannah very well, but really my brown skin requires something brighter to set it off. It stands to reason that what is becoming to a fair person must be unbecoming to one who is dark."

"Upon my word! And how long have *you* paid such attention to the becoming and unbecoming? I thought your mother had taught you to consider only what was neat!"

Rosina coloured. "This comes," pursued her ladyship in high dudgeon, "of letting such young girls have allowances! When I was a child of your age, I had a guinea to keep in my pocket, and never was allowed to buy myself so much as a box of patches. And as to a calash, or a polonaise——!"

"Pray, Lady Worral, what kind of things may those be? I never heard of them before."

"Pshaw! pretend never to have heard of a polonaise or a sacque? Come to me, some morning, and I'll shew you what they are. I'll shew you the primrose pattysway that I was married in, when I only measured twenty-one inches round the waist: one of your good old pattysways that would last a woman's lifetime, not like the flimsy things they make up now; and I might wear it to this day, if I could but get into it. Why is your mother always out when I come?"

"She could not guess that your ladyship meant to call upon her this morning. She has only gone to speak to Dame Stokes."

"Ah, she may perhaps stay gossipping with her for an hour. Molly Stokes has no objection to let her irons get red-hot before the fire while she is

telling all the news of the village. It was always her character. I remember her as a housemaid to Mrs. Greenway, about fifteen years ago, a strapping rosy-faced girl as you'd wish to see, and she was always gossipping at the shop or running over to the White Hart. She had a flirtation with Simon, the baker's man, and every body thought a match would come of it, but I knew better. So at last, you see, she was obliged to take up with Timothy Stokes. That's almost always the way with beauties; they think they may have whom they like; and plume themselves upon it, till they are obliged to sit down with worse luck than their neighbours. Mind that, young ladies. But it's of no use for old folks to talk, for young folks won't mind them. There was Mr. Russell read us a fine chapter yesterday about young women not clothing themselves in pearls and costly array, but I dare say Sam Good put it all out of your head, Rosina, before you had walked half down the lane."

"I am sure Sam Good had not the power of making me think of any thing but his own extreme disagreeability," said Rosina scornfully.

Lady Worral took a pinch of snuff, and then

said, "Well, I may depend on seeing you early, for of course you've no other engagement; and, Rosina, be sure you make yourself very smart for your new beau."

"Oh, it is a gentleman, is it?"

"There, I've let the cat out of the bag. But it's no one you have ever seen."

"Surely, Lady Worral, you may as well tell us all now. It can't be Captain Worral, for I know he's at Naples."

"No, he isn't, he's at Sorrento. No, this is the grandson of an old flame of mine, whom I danced with, many's the time, when I was a girl. I fell in with this young man an hour ago, when he was taking a sketch in my park."

"Mr. Huntley!" said both of the girls.

"Yes, it is, but how do you know any thing of him?"

"Oh, Mr. Russell introduced him to us on Friday, and we were all quite delighted with him. So then you know all about him?"

"All about him? I did not know the lad was in existence; for the last time I saw Captain Huntley was at an officers' ball in the year—let me see—no matter,—we were both of us single

then. That was the grandfather, you understand—a very fine man; he wore the willow for me two or three years, and then married a Miss Hutchinson. His only son grew up to be a fine young man too, and he bought a commission for him; but then, you see, this son thought proper to marry without his father's consent; and afterwards he was killed in America. So now you know all that I can tell you. *This* young man is as like his grandfather as possible, allowing for the disadvantage of his not wearing powder; and it seems that he has been brought up to painting. Bless me! if old Captain Huntley could look out of his grave, and see one of his descendants taking money for pictures! However, he's disowned by all his father's relations; notwithstanding which, I don't see any harm in having invited him to tea."

"Well!" cried Rosina, when Lady Worral was gone, "it seems he is a gentleman by descent at any rate!"

In the evening, or rather afternoon, when Mrs. Wellford and her daughters entered Lady Worral's drawing-room, they found Mr. Huntley already arrived and smilingly listening to an account of a

public breakfast at which his grandfather had figured fifty years ago. He gave up his chair to Mrs. Wellford, and manœuvred to get a seat next to Hannah, in which, however, he was disappointed; and before he had had time to suffer much from his loss, the three Miss Hollands arrived and a voluble explanation took place, how that Bessy *was* able to come after all, because Aunt Patty had unexpectedly come from town, and papa had always fancied Aunt Patty's nursing more than that of any one else. They were soon followed by Mr. and Mrs. Good and by Matthew Wellford. Matthew was a good-humoured and good-looking young man of about twenty, fair-haired, and uniting something of Hannah's countenance to Rosina's thoughtless spirits. Miss Phœbe Holland often condescended to bestow a few smiles on him, to which Matthew gratefully replied by some first-attempts at easy compliment; though he often complained to his sisters with much pathos, that "there was not a woman in Summerfield worth speaking to." Matthew, with considerable good taste and keenness of apprehension, was not free from *mauvaise honte;* and when he had nothing to say, he made up for it by

a laugh. His communications to Rosina, which, let them have been separated for ever so short a time, were always very fluent, he whisperingly conveyed to her this evening in the following manner.

" We got a new patient to-day. A famous rich old fellow—Mr. Kippis, who lives at the Grove, you know, about eight miles off. He always used to have Parker of Heeley, but Parker was out of the way, so the servant came on to us, and it's my opinion that now we've got our foot in there, we shall keep our ground. Parker is a low-bred, disagreeable fellow, disliked by all the ladies, and nothing would have got him into such practice but a false opinion of his skill. He's nothing! nothing at all, as people will find out at last. Well, and so as Mr. Good was obliged to go off to the Grove, you know, *I* was obliged to step over to the Miss Hinckleys at Hundleford, and very pretty girls they are, I assure you. There was one playing the harp. The old lady seemed at first rather dissatisfied at *the master's* not going over himself, but I explained how that was, so then all was right, and we got on famously. I went on the mare. Oh, by the by, what do

you think? Sam Good smuggled me over "The Last of the Mohicans!" So I have dipped into it once or twice behind the surgery counter, and to-night I mean to coax cook out of a long piece of candle, and have a good spell of it. Don't you envy me? You shall have it when I've done with it, if you like."

"Thank you, but I don't think mamma would like my borrowing novels of Sam Good."

"Oh, but I needn't tell Sam—He's in no hurry for it. But do as you like."

"Does it seem very interesting?"

"Oh! beyond every thing. The hero is a black. I mean a red. A red Indian! What do you think of that?"

"How frightful!"

"Not at all. He is very handsome. So" (lowering his voice) "that is the Mr. Huntley you were telling me of. He seems a lively little fellow. How he is running on to Hannah! He makes himself quite at home. These are London manners, I suppose; I wish I could rattle away in that manner; but I don't know how it is, I never can find any thing to say. Don't laugh, now; I mean

except to you and Hannah. To-day, for instance, all the way to Hundleford, I was thinking how I should make myself agreeable, and settling just the easy kind of way I should go in, and the easy kind of things I should say, all quite pat; but when the time came, I could not bring one of them in. Was not that tiresome?"

Mr. Russell at this moment made his entrée, and appeared surprised, though pleased, to find Huntley in the circle. Matthew seemed disposed to renew his confidences to Rosina.

"The worst of it is, Rosina, I shall never have an opportunity of improving my manners in this wretched neighbourhood; and manners are of such immense consequence in a medical man! There's Parker, now, might carry off all our business, if he had but good manners. Look at that Mr. Huntley! He's laughing and joking with Mrs. Good and Lady Worral, and yet, you know, he is not acquainted with any of their connexions, so that one would think he could have nothing but the weather to talk to them about. I think I shall go and profit by his agreeable nothings."

Matthew quitted his seat, but before he attained the object of his journey, he was arrested by Miss Phœbe Holland.

"Ah! Mr. Matthew, *I* saw you ride by to-day on your mare! Where were you going?"

"To see some very pretty young ladies, I can tell you, Miss Phœbe."

"Some very pretty young ladies? Well, who could they be? I don't think there are many pretty young ladies in this neighbourhood."

"Oh, pardon me, Miss Phœbe, I think I could name two or three."

"Dear me, could you?" said she, laughing, and evidently thinking that she must be included in the number. "Well now, really, with the exception of your sisters, I should be puzzled to find any. Fanny Good, to be sure, *will* be a beauty some of these days, but she's so very young yet. I should hardly think you alluded to any young ladies that weren't in their teens."

"Oh, but indeed I did—to one."

"Ha, ha, ha!—Well, at any rate your pretty young ladies this morning were not in the immediate neighbourhood, or else you would not have gone on horseback."

"That's a clever guess of yours. Now try then, if you can guess their name."

"Let me see. The Fields?"

"You don't call them beauties, I hope?"

"He, he! Oh, there's no accounting, you know, for tastes—I dare say they have their admirers. Well then—the Joliffes?"

"Out again."

"The Miss Petersons?"

"No."

"Tell me in which direction you rode—east, west, north, or south?"

"Oh, that would be telling you at once."

"*Not* the Petersons?"

"No."

"Nor the Joliffes?"

"No."

"Nor the Fields?"

"No."

"Well, I give up."

"The Miss Hinckleys."

"*Was* it indeed!

Matthew had now exhausted his "agreeable nothings," so he walked off.

After tea, Lady Worral made up her card-table,

and the young people gathered before the open window, which looked out on a terrace.

"Why should not we take a turn in the grounds?" said Matthew, "it would be pleasanter, this hot evening, than staying in doors."

"Yes, it would be delightful," said Rosina, running down the steps.

"Be prudent, young ladies," cried Mr. Good from his card-table—"there is an insidious air stirring this evening. It is very disinterested of me to give you warning."

"Yes, but very sly of you, Mr. Good," returned Mr. Russell, "to bring out a young pupil whose temptations to imprudence are likely to meet with more attention than your warnings. Come, shall we be imprudent enough to follow the general example?" added he, offering his arm to Hannah.

"Yes, yes, Mr. Russell," cried Lady Worral, "you had better follow the youngsters, to keep them in order. I'm sorry, young ladies, there's no chaperon for you—however, Bessy Holland is only a year younger than Mrs. Wellford, so she'll do quite as well."

Miss Holland laughed as gaily as she could,

and took Matthew's offered arm. "Which way shall we go?" said she.

"What is that curious old building I see among the trees?" said Huntley. "Is it a ruin?"

"That is the belfry," said Rosina; "Sir John Worral rung many a peal in it; and after his death the country people used sometimes to fancy on stormy nights, that they heard his ghost still trying the chimes."

"Indeed! I should like to have a nearer view of it."

Huntley placed himself between Rosina and the youngest Miss Holland; and Hannah and Mr. Russell soon found themselves left behind.

"I was not a little astonished," said Mr. Russell, "to find Mr. Huntley domesticated here this evening. Has he some spell which opens the doors of people's houses? How did Lady Worral become acquainted with him?"

"She met him sketching in her park this morning," said Hannah, "and as ceremony seldom prevents her from accosting any one who comes in her way, they entered into conversation, in the

course of which she discovered him to be the grandson of an old acquaintance.

"An old acquaintance! So far, so good," said Mr. Russell, "I don't think Mr. Huntley would impose on the old lady—"

"Impose! surely not," said Hannah. "Besides, she says he so closely resembles his grandfather that she should have known him any where for a Huntley."

"That is another lucky circumstance," observed he, "for Lady Worral has a quick eye and a good memory. Well, I am glad to have some one's authority besides his own, for the respectability of his connexions. His manners indeed, speak for themselves. Yet prepossessed as I was by them, I could not help having a few misgivings, when it was too late, as to the propriety of having introduced him to you while so slightly acquainted with his character. There is an apparent candour, indeed, about him, which makes it difficult to believe him other than what he seems; but so many virtues are requisite in the man whom we admit into female society——"

"I think you are unnecessarily apprehensive," replied Hannah; "Lady Worral confirms

his assertion of respectable birth, and your cousin Frank's intimacy with him relieves him from the suspicion of being a bad moral character. His varied talents render him a very amusing companion, and that is all we shall ever think of him."

"How can you be sure of that?" said Mr. Russell. "From what Huntley said this evening to Lady Worral, it seems he means to stay in Summerfield as long as he finds any thing here to *amuse* or *interest* him. May not there be more in that than meets the ear? You see he is no longer merely my acquaintance, but will be able to visit here and at your mother's on his own ground. The degree of intimacy which will follow will be entirely voluntary; and the more fascinating his talents, the more firm will become his footing, till at length it may be rather difficult to——"

"I know whom you are thinking of *now*, Mr. Russell," said Hannah with an ingenuous expression of countenance, "but you need not alarm yourself. There is no fear of Rosina."

"None, I believe! none!" returned Mr. Russell smiling with a relieved air. "Here is the belfry," he presently observed, "but where are our

village belles? In what direction, I wonder, have Matthew and Mr. Huntley run away with them, or have they run away with Matthew and Mr. Huntley? I am not so quick-witted as an Indian, in following a trail."

"I think I hear Miss Phœbe Holland's voice to the left," said Hannah. "Most likely they have walked up the hill. See, here is a rose which has dropped, or been thrown away."

"You would follow a trail better than I should. Well, and has Rosina been very industrious with her pencil ever since the lecture Mr. Huntley read her on Friday night?"

"Yes, she has endeavoured to improve on his hints."

"And you also?"

"Oh, no, I have almost given up drawing. My pursuit of success in that amusement always meets with disappointment."

"With disappointment, does it? Ahem! Do you know the genealogy of Disappointment? I will tell you her history. She was the daughter of a certain couple called Ignorance and Expectation; but when Ignorance died, his widow married an honest gentleman named Moderation, who

carried her off to his country seat; and from that day, Expectation never saw Disappointment again."

"So, if we are moderate in our expectations, we shall never be disappointed; that is the moral of your allegory, is it not?"

"Stay, I must tell you what became of Disappointment when she was thus unfeelingly deserted by her mother. Miss Disappointment, being left to her own devices, began, like other young ladies, to look out for a husband. Now it so happened that in the very garret adjoining her own lodged a young poet, whose name—whose name was Alcander—and whose days and nights were devoted to the composition of an epic poem. Well, Hannah, Disappointment, artfully veiled, continually placed herself in his path—poets, you know, love adventure and mystery—Alcander's curiosity was excited, and he began to enquire who this veiled fair one could be. Ask whom he would, he could obtain no information, his friends shook their heads and knew nothing about her: at last, teazed by his importunity, one of them, a wag, and rather an ill-natured one we must allow, told him her name was Success."

"Oh, poor Alcander! I see what is to happen now. Under this mistake, you will make him marry Disappointment. Well, pray go on."

"You are angry with Alcander's friend? but what can one do when some pert young author is continually troubling one with his manuscript effusions, but advise him to favour the world by their publication? Yes, Alcander, as you guess, married Disappointment, his poem was rejected by the booksellers, and poverty stared him in the face. However, his wife proved herself a useful though unfavoured helpmate; for she pointed out to him the faults of his MS., assisted him in correcting them, and gave him much valuable advice; so that, in time, he began to look on her harsh features with composure, if not with affection. At length he became one of the first writers of the age; Disappointment died; and after a moderately short courtship, he married Success, whose smiles conferred on him all the happiness a young poet could desire. There, Hannah, have not I wound up my story in the true novel like manner?"

"I wish Rosina had been here!" said Hannah.

"Could not you write out that pretty allegory for her, Mr. Russell?"

"Write it out? Ah, Hannah, my days for writing poetry are over, and it would cut a shabby figure in plain prose. No, no, if you mean her to benefit by the moral, she must have your own version of the story."

They now came in sight of the rest of the party, who were standing on the brow of the hill. "How composedly you two steady folks have climbed up to us!" cried Rosina. "I dare say you prefer a moral dissertation to the finest sunset in the world."

"I repel such an accusation with scorn," said Mr. Russell. "Yes; such a sunset as this, is indeed worth seeing!"

"Worth seeing! what an unpoetical phrase! Mr. Huntley has been talking almost in blank verse about those glorious gold and purple clouds. Oh, they are beautiful! most beautiful!"

"Beautiful!" repeated Mr. Russell, "I am very glad we do not live in a slate-colour world."

"A slate-colour world! What an exceedingly odd idea!" cried Miss Phœbe Holland. "Only

fancy how droll it would be to see skies, trees, faces, water, and every thing slate-colour!"

"Ay, or yellow, as people do who have the jaundice," said Matthew.

"A fine Claude-Lorraine effect, no doubt," cried Huntley, laughing.

"And there are more unhappy victims still," remarked Mr. Russell, "who labour under a moral jaundice, and see every thing the sickly colour of their own tempers. They are the most to be pitied."

"Well, I'm sure we may be very thankful," said Miss Holland, "that none of *us* are affected by these horrible diseases bodily or mental."

"What amazing variety there is," said Mr. Russell after a pause, "in those western clouds! Cannot you look at them till you fancy you behold a fairy land of snow-white palaces and mountains, golden lakes and sapphire streams?"

"Often have *I* indulged in such dreams, I assure you," said Huntley, "and sighed to awake to the remembrance that we were not made to be the tenants of such heavenly scenery."

"Not till the 'cloud-capped towers and gorgeous palaces' of our present residence are whelmed

in final ruin; but who knows? we may then find ourselves the denizens of a new land combining the substantial beauty of the planet we now inhabit with some of that fairy splendour which mocks our grasp in the fleeting vapours.—

> 'What if earth
> Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
> Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?'"

"Well," said Miss Phœbe, after a pause which to some of the party was awkward, and to others full of thought, "I'm sure I always thought in the future world we were to walk upon clouds."

"Had we not better think of returning?" cried Miss Margaret, "it's dangerous standing about."

"I think so too," said Miss Phœbe—"La! there's a cloud just the shape of a gigot sleeve!—do let us have a run down the hill."

She seized Rosina's arm as she spoke, and darted off, followed by Miss Margaret and Matthew. Mr. Russell offered an arm to Miss Holland, and Huntley placing himself on the other side of Hannah, easily managed to detach her from her older escort as the path narrowed.

"Much character peeps out," said he in a low voice, "even in passing remarks on a cloud. The

golden mists which supply the painter with hints for canvasses yet unstretched, and the preacher with glimpses of paradise, remind *some* ladies of a gigot sleeve! Oh, 'most odorous' comparison!"

"Dear me!" cried Phœbe Holland at the same instant to Rosina, as she stood fanning herself with her handkerchief at the foot of the hill, "Mr. Russell is a very nice sort of a man and very good and so on, but he's always bringing in speeches about heaven and that sort of thing, isn't he? And really I think it's rather ill-bred, for it stops one from laughing and one don't always know how to answer him."

"I think you are rather severe on poor Mr. Russell," said Rosina, who never could bear agreeing with Phœbe Holland in any thing of higher concern than the colour of a ribband; "no one can accuse him of quoting Scripture out of season; and as to his similes and speculations, I think they are very pleasing and striking; and mamma thinks so too."

"Well, well, but let me just give you an instance of what I mean," resumed Miss Phœbe: "suppose Mr. Russell——"

"Who speaks of Mr. Russell?" cried he, a few

paces in the rear, "take care, Miss Phœbe, that I overhear no secrets."

"La, Mr. Russell! how fast you and Bessy have come down the hill! Listeners, you know, never hear any good of themselves."

"Don't they, though?" cried Matthew.—"Remember, Miss Phœbe, what *I* overheard between two certain ladies, one night, at Mrs. Greenway's! Do *you* recollect?"

"Oh, Mr. Wellford, for goodness' sake, don't tell that silly story now, I beg! If you do, I'll never forgive you!" cried she in distress, partly real, partly affected.

"Well, I'll be upon honour," replied he, with a triumphant smile.

"I'm sure I hope," whispered Phœbe Holland, pulling Rosina back to let the others pass, "that Mr. Russell did'nt overhear us. He made me start, did he not you? He has such a keen, sly way of looking at one sometimes, just as if he could see into one's thoughts; and one likes to be on good terms with the clergyman, especially where there's so little change of society. Do you know I sometimes fancy he thinks seriously of Bessy, for he pays a great deal more attention to

her than to either of us young ones. I wonder if any thing will ever come of it. But, my dear, do tell me who that agreeable Mr. Huntley is. It seems you have met him before."

Poor Rosina was always extremely annoyed when she fell into the clutches of Phœbe Holland, for whose weak understanding and frivolous conversation she had very little tolerance. Miss Phœbe had a sort of instinctive awe of Hannah's quiet, gentle dignity, but she chose to fancy there was a great similarity of tastes between herself and Rosina, who found some difficulty in checking her attempts at confidential intimacy. Most girls have been exposed to the advances of some such undesirable acquaintance, and they are happy who are able to draw a line which gently, but steadily, intimates to the fair intruder that so far she may come but no further. On the present occasion, Rosina, upon her return to Lady Worral's drawing-room, was unwillingly detained from the group formed by her brother and sister, Mr. Russell, Mr. Huntley, and the elder Miss Hollands, by a long detail of Phœbe's concerning the how-and-about of the approaching marriage of Sophia Jane Browne, one of her vulgar cousins, to

a Mr. Higgs or Briggs. All very interesting to the parties concerned, no doubt; but what indifferent person could be expected to listen with satisfaction, or even patience, to the courtship between a Miss Browne and a Mr. Briggs? Rosina listened with divided attention as she caught snatches of the distant repartee and tantalizing laugh. At length Mr. Huntley approached her, followed by Matthew.

"Would it be treason," said he, "to break in on such confidential and intellectual intercourse as you two ladies are doubtless sharing, with a request for a little music?"

"I am afraid, Mr. Huntley, you are very satirical. You do not give us credit in your heart for conversing in a manner either confidential or intellectual."

"Upon my word I do. Why else have you 'sat apart' like Milton's angels, without deigning to listen to the innocent trifles at which Miss Wellford and Miss Holland have been laughing? In the midst of their mirth and of my folly, I could not help glancing occasionally towards this bow-window, where, I conjectured you were entertaining 'thoughts more elevate' and holding

debate on—what shall I say?—not on fate and fore-knowledge, but on

> Broken hearts and vows, sleeves, bonnets, caps,
> Bills registered, and expectations sure.

Was I far from the truth?"

"I shall not tell you. Why should ladies be unable to talk of any thing better than bonnets and caps?"

"I do not question the ability,—only the will. They *may* talk of better things—they *cannot* talk of prettier things—unless they talk of themselves."

Miss Phœbe laughed. Matthew thought the last turn very neat.

"But with regard to bonnets," continued Huntley, sitting down by Rosina, "there may be a great difference of tastes between us. Now, I once had a conversation about bonnets with a Royal Academician——"

"With a Royal Academician!"

"Yes; why not? Is there anything so very odd in a Royal Academician's condescending to analyze the beauty or deformity of a bonnet? We agreed that the more colourless, battered, and mis-shapen it could be, the better."

"The better!"

"Yes—for pictorial purposes. I was painting a fancy portrait of a young lady sitting out of doors, and we had down all my mother's and sister's bonnets to see which would come in best. There was a black silk, and a white satin, and a Dunstable straw, and a pink crape. Not one of them was picturesque. We had up the maid servant's—her best and her worst.—Still too good. At that moment, a little beggar-girl happened to be hanging over the rails. We threw up the window, concluded the bargain in two minutes for ninepence, and took in the old hat on a stick. It was the essence of shape and colour! My dainty lady-sitter would, however, by no means put it on, so we fitted it on a block. It was the admiration of all Somerset House!—After this, madam, do not suppose it beneath a man's genius to think of a bonnet!"

Huntley paused, and then renewed his request for music.

"Have you any idea on what sort of an instrument you are inviting me to play?" said Rosina.

"No, its outward appearance is certainly rather antique, but is it so miserable a piano?"

"A harpsichord of the worst description. The first chord I should strike on its jingling keys would make you run out of the room."

"Oh terrible! I certainly think people are not justified in inviting acquaintance to their houses unless they are provided with some means of entertaining them."

"Why, as to that," interposed Matthew, "if people are but got together, no matter how, I think they may always entertain themselves."

"By laughing at each other?"

"No—by talking, as we are doing now."

"Oh—entertaining themselves by entertaining each other. Why, as to talking as we are doing now, *that* is beyond the power of some. People are so foolish as generally to set about talking on those things of which they know least. A musician tries to discuss soups and *pâtés* very scientifically with an epicure, the epicure makes blunders about crotchets and graves. A lady talks to a gentleman of politics, and he returns the compliment by expatiating on bonnets."

"Well, and in this way you get a great deal of general conversation."

"Yes, they do well to stick to generals, for not

one of them is competent to descend into particulars. To prevent their finding out each other's deficiencies, there ought to be the requisites for music and dancing, portfolios of prints, or costumes for proverbs and charades—"

"Charades? what are they?" inquired Miss Phœbe.

"Is it possible you have never seen an acted charade? Oh, it is the prettiest amusement in the world, and allows the freest scope imaginable for fine wit, fine dresses, and fine attitudes. Could not we get one up now? These folding doors would be very convenient, and I should think Lady Worral's wardrobe would furnish a most amusing assortment of costumes."

"Yes, for old aunts and grandmothers," said Rosina, "but are the actors' speeches extempore? It must be very difficult—"

"Oh, by no means—even the Bourgeois Gentilhomme could speak prose without knowing it; and as for blank verse,—if you are at no loss for sentiments, the metre will come of itself."

"I doubt that," said Matthew, taking a deep breath.

"'Tis the easiest thing in the world," cried

Huntley. "Why, I could talk to you in blank verse for an hour together if you would listen to me, no matter the subject. Lend me your ears—

> He talked in metre, for the metre came;
> Not like the coach of Chrononhotonthologus
> Which came not when 'twas summoned, for the metre
> Came without calling. Therein was the difference;
> And judgement's shewn in shewing differences,
> As wit in shewing likenesses.

Miss Phœbe, how do you like my speaking in blank verse?"

"Oh, excellent, excellent!" cried she, laughing. "Pray do it again."

"'Tis gone!" said Huntley, waving his hand, "the spirit has passed."

"But do tell us more about these charades, Mr. Huntley," said Rosina. "Cannot you describe one to us?"

"Not, I fear, so as to give you any idea of their spirit. But I will just sketch you an outline. Imagine us all to be sitting here in darkness, as spectators, while those folding doors shut out half a dozen actors from our view. Well; the door opens; we see an extemporaneous shop-counter, with a tradesman behind it setting out his wares,

consisting of cutlery. In comes a very dandified customer. "Ah!—hum—ha!—my fine feller—what did you mean by impertinently furnishing me with—a—hum—ha!—a perfectly useless commodity?'—'A parfactly useless commodity, sar, I don't understand what you mean.'—'Come, come, Mr. a—razor-stropper, if—a—you make any difficulty in taking back your bad goods and restoring me my money, I shall—a—take the disagreeable trouble of ejecting you and your manufactures into the street'—'Sar! let me tell you, sar, I won't put up with no such language, sar, from no man, neither will I return your money, nor permit you to haul me over my counter.'—'Why, what, what, what, what (stuttering with rage,) do you mean by this impertinence?'—'Sar, 'tis you sar, that are impartinent.'—'Your razors are totally without edge, they are good for nothing'—'Sar, you mistake, they answer the purpose they were made for parfactly well.'—'Why, you old Jew! you won't tell me that to my face, will you? What are razors made for, if not to cut?'—'Sar, they are made to *sell*.' On this, a scuffle ensues and the scene closes. Can you guess the syllable?"

"Jew? razor?"

"No—no. Well, in the next scene, we have a lady sitting down to dine without her husband, for whom she has vainly waited, and at the same time a couple of poor cousins drop in, who are not above taking rather mean methods of procuring an invitation to dinner. Mrs. Smith, the lady of the house, has a cutlet for herself, as she cannot touch her husband's favourite dish of mackarel, of which her cousins profess themselves immoderately fond. They apply themselves to the fish, but their appetites, which a moment before had appeared very keen, are now visibly damped. Cousin Peter calls for a bone-plate, and watching his opportunity, places it on his knees beneath the tablecloth. He and his wife exchange wry faces. The conversation proceeds with a good deal of humour and equivoque, when the hostess is called from table by a lamentable accident in the nursery—possibly one of her children has fallen into the fire, or out of window. No sooner has she hastily quitted the apartment than Cousin Peter and his wife begin their lamentations—'My dear, did you ever taste such mackarel?'—'Taste, my love?

The smell has been enough for me—it is in what our worthy friend Pat Brady would call the highest state of *petrefaction*.'—'Then how did you manage to ask for a second helping?'—Peter produces the plate from between his knees, they laugh, and the scene closes as he proceeds to throw its contents out of window. Cannot you guess now?"

"No."

"I think your brother has guessed. Well, now for the finale. Enter Mrs. Germaine to her dear friend Lady Mary, who is always willing to perform good-natured actions when they give her no manner of inconvenience. 'My dear Lady Mary, I am come to beg a little favour.'—'Oh, dearest Mrs. Germaine, pray name it; I am always so happy——' 'Why, my dear creature, it is merely this. I have a family of country cousins come to spend a week with me, and as I wish to make their time pass pleasantly, I shall be excessively obliged to you if you will lend us your opera box to-night.' 'Why really, my dear Mrs. Germaine, I should be delighted to do so, but it happens that to-night it will be particularly inconvenient,

—for—I have a new hat which I have set my heart on wearing,—and—I expect to see Colonel Jonquil, who will bring me information about the sweet little French poodle he promised to buy for me,—so that really,—you see, my dear creature, how I am situated.' 'Well, dear Lady Mary, I own I am disappointed, as you have so often said your box was at my service,—however, perhaps on Saturday,' 'Saturday? oh certainly—though, now I recollect, there is a new opera coming out on that night, and you know I am so passionately fond of music! But I will keep a place for *you!*' 'Thank you, but I cannot leave my cousins.'—'Well then, any evening *after* this week.'—'I am much obliged to your ladyship, but my guests leave me on Monday.' 'How very annoying! Well, I'm sure I am amazingly provoked at being unable to oblige you, but you see it is so completely out of my power.' 'Oh, pray make no excuse.' 'Any thing *else*.' 'Yes, yes, I understand your ladyship.' 'Or any other *time*.' 'Certainly, certainly, I feel your kindness. The disappointment is of no consequence.'—(Aside, as she goes out. 'I shall know, in future, how to value the goodnature of Lady Mary.')"

"Oh, Mr. Huntley! I have guessed! It is *sel-fish*, is not it?"

"Undoubtedly."

"How excellent! how entertaining! Do let us ask Lady Worral's consent to a charade. Lady Worral, will you grant us a favour?"

"Let us hear it first," said her Ladyship, without looking up from her cards.

"Mr. Huntley has a charming amusement to propose. It is something like a play—"

"And where is he to find actors, scenery, and dresses?"

"Mr. Huntley! do you hear?"

"Oh, your ladyship's furniture and wardrobe will be amply sufficient for the two latter, and as for the actors, I doubt not some of the present company will lend their assistance, with your ladyship's permission."

"My ladyship will permit no such thing," replied Lady Worral bluntly. "A fine thing, indeed, for my dresses and furniture to be pulled about by a set of racketty young people, and for unmarried young ladies and clergymen to act stage-plays! No, no; the Miss Darevilles' acting in the Fair Penitent and She Stoops to Con-

quer thirty years ago, gave me a sickening of private theatricals. Miss Rosina will favour us with a song, I dare say."

"I am terribly hoarse," said Rosina.

"Then your voice would never do for the stage," observed Lady Worral. "Come, come, open the harpsichord; and if you won't play, perhaps Phœbe Holland will."

Miss Phœbe only required a little pressing from Matthew and Mr. Huntley to consent; and she favoured them with a ballad which though it had been ground for six months on the London hand-organs, had not yet lost its novelty in Summerfield. She maintained her seat at the instrument till Huntley began to repent his original proposal for music. Rosina made some amends by singing 'Come unto these yellow sands,' in a young, rich voice that might have suited Ariel; and Mr. Good joined Huntley in supplying the chorus. In another half-hour, the whole party were returning through the park.

At the park-gates, the Goods and Hollands wished their companions good night. Mr. Russell and Mr. Huntley, who had walked beside Mrs. Wellford and Hannah, proposed seeing them

home; and Matthew, who led the way with Rosina, soon left the more leisurely pedestrians behind.

"What a pleasant evening this has been!" said Rosina.

"Famous!" said Matthew, "I only wish Sam Good had been with us."

"I am sure I wish no such thing," said Rosina.

"Sam is a good fellow," replied Matthew, "though, I allow, not equal to this Mr. Huntley. And yet we might have been as merry, if instead of him, we had had Sam."

"Oh, Matthew! how can you think so!"

"You are all for new faces, Rosina—I am more steady to old ones. What do we know of this fine rattling gentleman? There is a *something* about him, certainly, which I feel I want—a kind of ease, off-handedness, lightness, brilliancy, what French people call *je ne sçai quoi*—and yet I can't recollect any thing he said which was particularly clever—nothing equal to that bon-mot of Sam's——"

"Oh, Matthew, do not give me any of Sam's bon-mots to-night."

"Very well—you are punishing yourself, for

the bon-mot was a very good one. Here we are. How brightly the moon shines! What an immense time they are coming down the lane! Well, good night; you know I am impatient to return to 'The Last of the Mohicans.'"

CHAPTER X.

DRAWING LESSONS, GRATIS.

Mr. Huntley was indefatigable in the practice of his art. He rose with the lark, and, sketch-book in hand, roamed daily in search of the picturesque, till scarcely a tree or tenement, cottage or cottager, but had found a place in his portfolio. The rural housewives were pleased with the clever young gentleman who praised the beauty of their children, asked leave to copy their old tables and chairs, and shewed them the views he had already taken of the church and the vicarage. They were proud that he should think it worth his while to copy anything of theirs into his book, and remarked to one another that whereas they had 'heard say' that painters got great sums of money from gentlefolks for drawing their pictures, *this* young painter was another guess *sort*

of body, for he gave half-pence and sixpences to folks for letting their likenesses be taken. Huntley viewed with complacence the heads of John Giles, and Joe Barton, and Mary Smith, of which he had thus been enabled to make studies; but there was a darling wish of his soul yet unsatisfied—every time he saw Hannah Wellford, he was more and more struck with her Madonna-like loveliness; and his desire to paint her portrait was increased rather than diminished by the improbability of obtaining her consent. He often tried to sketch the outline of her placid features from memory, and as often gave up the attempt in despair.

Huntley frequently spent his evenings at the vicarage; and the knowledge that Mr. Russell was '*l' ami intime*' at the White Cottage would have induced him to have requested his intercession, had not a certain indescribable feeling persuaded him that Mr. Russell would be the worst person in the world to entrust with such an office. "I shall remain here a little longer, however, for the chance," thought Huntley; and his two or three days at the White Hart accordingly lengthened into two or three weeks.

One morning, soon after the party at Lady Worral's, Huntley called at the White Cottage, ostensibly to ask Rosina for his little book, if she had no longer any need of it. The two young ladies and their mother were seated at a table covered with work and drawing materials; and Rosina, at his earnest entreaty, was prevailed on to shew him the sketch which she had corrected according to his directions Huntley was surprised and pleased at the intelligence with which she had acted on his hints; he spoke to her with real interest and enthusiasm of his art; not as if he were dressing his thoughts to please the idle fancy of a mere common-place young lady, but as if he felt he was addressing himself to one who could appreciate sense and genius. Not only Rosina, but her mother, and sister, listened with delight. "This is a surprising young man," said Mrs. Wellford when he was gone. "I hope you will have the good sense, Rosina, to improve by his instructions without being spoilt by his praise." "Certainly, certainly," replied Rosina hastily, "you see, mamma, he speaks to me as if I were a reasonable being. He tells me my faults." Hannah thought this was the first time her sister

had ever mentioned that circumstance in any one's commendation.

The next day, and the next, and the next, Mr. Huntley "looked in," as he said, "just for a minute," to direct Rosina's pencil; and the minute was lengthened into an hour, often passed in nearly unbroken silence, but silence *that spoke*. A word, a direction, set Rosina to work with an industry and interest in her subject which precluded her joining in conversation: Huntley cast the drapery or placed the bust which she was to copy, in the right light, and then sat half behind her chair, watching his pupil's progress with real interest, and speaking from time to time to Mrs. Wellford or admiring Hannah's profile as she bent over her work. The quiet and orderliness of these *academical* proceedings, in which Mrs. Wellford always took a share, prevented her from infusing any coldness into her manner when the young artist with a whimsical, half-apologetic tone daily entered with, "Well, madam, here I am again, you see, punctual as the clock—there will be no breaking off my bad habit unless you fairly turn me out."

"So, Rosina!" said Mr. Russell one afternoon

as he passed the garden gate and saw her just within it, collecting some columbine seed, "you are taking regular drawing-lessons, I find."

"Who told you so?" said she, blushing.

"What does that signify? Would it alter the case? I suppose you will be a Mrs. Raffaelle some of these days."

Whether Mr. Russell used these words in the sense in which Rosina took them, remains to be proved, but certain it is that she blushed amazingly.

"Did a little Italian boy come here this morning, with some plaster casts?" pursued he, worrying off a twig of sweet briar as he spoke.

"Oh yes," cried Rosina starting up and letting fall her columbine seed, "I bought half his remaining stock. Luckily Mr. Huntley was here, so that he told me which were worth buying and which were not. The boy was quite a model for a painter, was he not? Mr. Huntley had a great mind to take his likeness, and he talked to him for some time in Italian. I was so sorry I did not understand Italian! But Mr. Huntley told me the boy said his name was Domenico and that he came from Lucca."

"Which perhaps the urchin might have told *you*, if you had asked him in English. However, it is a very good thing to be able to speak Italian. Have you finished the first volume of Dr. Clarke's Remains?"

"Not quite. Are you in want of it?"

"No, there is no hurry—I shall not return it till Mr. Huntley goes to town, which I suppose will be this week or the next. Most probably he will be polite enough to take charge of a parcel. Good afternoon, Rosina; you have an hour's work before you, I see, in picking up that columbine seed."

Huntley often wished that Hannah had possessed Rosina's genius, or Rosina, Hannah's beauty. Fate seemed to oblige him to be most occupied with the sister who attracted him least. It was always Rosina whose drawings he had to correct, to whose accompaniment he was to sing, and to whose sallies he was to find suitable repartees: and thus, without the smallest intentional deceit, it was natural for both sisters to believe that Rosina was preferred. How it happened that Hannah's tranquil countenance and manner should have more charms for the artist than

Rosina's glowing complexion, brilliant eyes, and quickness of intellect, can only be accounted for on the principle that people frequently are most attracted by their opposites. Hannah's want of genius in Huntley's favourite art vexed him no farther than as it prevented his having so much direct intercourse with her as with her sister: "it would not heighten her beauty" thought he, "nor, if she should, some happy day, become a painter's wife, would it be necessary or desirable that both of us should paint.—Easel of my easel and brush of my brush would soon cease to be either convenient or entertaining." So Huntley contentedly returned to watch Rosina's progress.

The very best efforts of a female pencil or brush must always fall far below those even of many second-rate masters. "The mind," as Dr. Johnson said of Barry, "does its part;" but the hand fails. The knowledge of anatomy is wanting, and even Angelica Kauffmann, who went through an ordeal to which no woman of delicacy would submit*, can only claim the merit of being a *graceful* artist; a painter among ladies, but only a lady among painters. *Demi-talent* is all

* Her father used to take her to the Academy in boy's clothes.

that is granted us. If the hand is mechanically obedient to the eye, grasp of mind and accurate knowledge of the human figure are wanting: if the imagination is brilliant, the mind is willing, but the hand is found to be weak. How should it be otherwise? When it is considered that art is long, but life is short, that the painter must rise early and study late, scarcely let an hour pass without a line, try chemical experiments for the improvement of his perishable materials, have an eye in all societies and situations for draperies, physiognomies, lights, shades, and happy effects; and that all these must be worked out on his canvass with patient labour, in spite of temptations to pleasure or idleness,—that art, in fact, besides the requisites of a cultivated mind and vigorous imagination, demands as complete an apprenticeship as any handicraft trade,—it must be seen that no woman with the thousand breaks in on her leisure to which she is liable, can hope to arrive at perfection in this charming pursuit, consistently with the duties becoming her sex; nor would any but the most egregious vanity induce her to suppose that her casual efforts could attain that which costs men of

genius a lifetime. Nevertheless, without an unjustifiable sacrifice of time, a female artist may proceed to a certain point brilliantly, and excite both pleasure and surprise, without provoking envy. We are always struck at beholding effects produced by apparently inadequate means; and intelligent artists, who are perfectly aware of the gulf between them and their female competitors, are always ready to yield indulgent praise to their graceful compositions; while the ladies are generally too proud that one of their sex should seem likely to share the wreath with haughty man, to be jealous at being individually excelled in so quiet a pursuit.

Mr. Huntley watched Rosina's progress in the same manner as a lettered sage might watch a clever little girl learning to read; feeling curious to know how far she would proceed at the same pace, though pretty certain she would never gain the lofty eminence on which he himself stood. Huntley's manner combined the indulgence and respect due to the sex of his scholar, with the sympathy of one who knew every step of the path she was treading; and the satisfaction with which he conversed with her on his favourite

art, contributed to prolong the mistake into which the sisters had fallen.

There was a beautiful view to be seen from Heeley Common, at about four miles' distance from Summerfield, which Huntley had not yet discovered; and Mrs. Wellford, finding herself unable to give him an exact direction to the spot in consequence of the variety of tracks which crossed the heath, proposed to shew him the way in the afternoon. The distance was allowed to be too great for female feet, but a donkey-chaise could be borrowed of the Miss Hollands, by means of which they might all have an agreeable excursion. The young people were charmed with the plan; and soon after an early dinner, the donkey-chaise was sent for and obtained. Mr. Russell passed the cottage at the moment that the rural equipage drew up; and on learning the object of the expedition, he said he would gladly form one of the party. The sketch-books were safely stowed beneath the seat; and Mrs. Wellford, assuming the office of charioteer, asked which of the young ladies intended to favour her with her company.

Rosina, for reasons well known to herself, had

decided on walking; and she said so much more than the occasion required, about being an excellent pedestrian, never feeling tired, scorning donkey-chaises, &c., that Hannah, without more ado, took the vacant seat, and the party set off.

Mr. Russell offered his arm to Rosina, Huntley walked next to her on the opposite side, and for some little time, the whole party continued together, exchanging desultory remarks on the scenery and the weather; but presently coming to a steep cart-track, Huntley ran forward to support the chaise, which seemed to him in imminent danger of losing its balance, and he continued to keep his hand on the side rail while answering some inquiry of Mrs. Wellford's. Arrived at the end of the lane, a fine turfy down opened before them; the donkey began to trot and Huntley to run, still keeping his hold on the chaise elbow and continuing his laughing dialogue with the ladies, which, from the rattling of the wheels was necessarily carried on in a raised tone of voice. The clear fresh air of the heath heightened the complexions of Hannah and Huntley, each of whom thought they had never seen the other look so handsome; and the race continued till a slope in

the downs carried them out of sight of Rosina and Mr. Russell. Hannah looked back after them once or twice, and asked her mother if they had not better wait.

"That is easier said than done, Hannah," replied Mrs. Wellford, smiling, as she vainly pulled the rein, "Our magnanimous donkey seems to have snuffled inspiration from the breezy air."

"Is this your best driving, madam?" asked Huntley, gaily, "I thought you had been a better whip. Ah, give him the rein; you are hurting your gloves more than his mouth. This unwonted speed will soon abate, depend upon it; and we may as well await our distanced companions at the foot of the next hill as any where else."

Acting on this resolution, they half traversed Heeley common.

Rosina, in the mean while, had been rather annoyed at being left behind with Mr. Russell. "He had joined them," she said to herself, "without being wanted by any body, and now had completely broken up the party."

"Had not we better walk faster?" said she,

gently dragging him forward as she spoke: "they will be out of sight presently."

But no: Mr. Russell hung heavy on hand.

"We cannot keep up with them," said he composedly, "and I dare say they will wait for us at the bottom of the slope."

"Oh, don't trust to that," cried Rosina eagerly, "for I know the Hollands's donkey of old, and when it once takes to trotting on Heeley-heath, it never stops till it reaches the foot of White-thorn hill.

"In that case," replied Mr. Russell, "there is still less chance of our keeping up with them; so you see, Rosina, it was a lucky thing I fell in with you, or you would have been left to yourself."

"No, that I should not, I am sure," cried Rosina, indignantly tossing her chin. "Don't you think," resumed she, again endeavouring to impel her companion a little faster, "that we had better try to gain the slope at any rate, before they are out of sight, that we may see which track they take?"

"Oh!" continued Mr. Russell, "I know my way to the brow of the hill perfectly well."

"But I am not so sure that mamma does," interrupted Rosina.

"If she loses her way," replied he drily, "we are not answerable for it; since she has run away from us, not we from her. However, we shall all meet at our journey's end, I make no doubt."

Rosina could not help letting her lips betray that note of impatience which can only be imperfectly implied on paper by the syllable "tut!" The vexation was increased by her imperturbable companion's coming to a full stop, apparently for no other purpose than to scent the reviving air.

"Delightful!" exclaimed he at length, with a tone and countenance of keen enjoyment. "Here, indeed, as your favourite Cowper expresses it, the sense is regaled

'With luxury of unexpected sweets.'"

"*My* favourite Cowper!" repeated Rosina with contempt, "Hannah's favourite Cowper, if you please. I have no taste for such dull, prosy writers, who instead of giving airy nothings a local habitation and a name, describe just what is before their eyes and no more, with the accuracy of a camera obscura. The 'Lay of the Last

Minstrel' is worth all that a thousand Cowpers could write. 'The Task' too! Such a name! Enough to sicken one at the very outset. There is a great deal in a name, though Juliet chose not to think so; and Cowper fixed on one equally hateful to teacher and scholar."

"Very good, Rosina!" said Mr. Russell laughing, there is much originality in what you say, and I always derive amusement from your ideas, though they are not—or more properly, *because* they are not in exact accordance with my own. As to your opinion on the subject of names, I agree with you that Miss Juliet Capulet was very unadvised when she exclaimed, 'What's in a name?' and that she would have been compelled to answer 'a great deal,' if it could have been proved that the so-called Signor Romeo Montague had no right to any other appellation than plain Stokes or Stubbs. Her love would speedily have been nipped in the bud, we may be certain. I myself am not a little proud of a name which revives associations with the noble, the brave, and the patriotic; and Mr. Huntley would fall five per cent. in your estimation, I dare say, if he were to turn out a mere Smith or Williams."

"Some people," said Rosina, "have more to boast of than their names."

"Why, that is true, too," rejoined Mr. Russell, "and I think you, Rosina, are among the number; for Wellford is not a very striking name. Rosina is pretty and Italian-like enough, but Wellford has not much to recommend it. Take my advice, therefore, and change it as soon as possible."

"Really, Mr. Russell——" exclaimed Rosina very pettishly.

"Really what, Miss Rosina?"

"Why, you sometimes sicken me of sense; but your nonsense is ten times worse."

Mr. Russell laughed with such thorough good-humour at this speech, that Rosina, fearful of having rather exceeded the bounds of propriety, began to think she might as well treat him with a little more consideration. She was also aware that she was exposing herself to ridicule by displaying so much vexation at having been forsaken by Huntley. For the next ten minutes, therefore, all was smooth and agreeable.

At the expiration of that time, our walkers gained the top of the slope, and could perceive no

traces of their companions on the wide extended heath before them. Rosina's irritation now returned, and she declared that it was ill-natured of her mother and Hannah to leave her behind, as she was growing very tired.

"Indeed?" cried Mr. Russell, "then you sadly over-rated your powers when you said you were sure you could walk to Heeley-hill and back without fatigue! Bless me, what can be done in this emergency? How came you so to deceive yourself? But perhaps," added he, gleaming slyly at her delicate *chaussure* and the pretty French glove that rested on his arm, "perhaps your fatigue in some measure depends on who is your companion."

Rosina was too much provoked to answer.

"Well then," pursued the abominable Russell, "as silence gives consent, I am to infer that Huntley is the happy man. Poor me! What shall I do to render myself less obnoxious? Shall we turn back? I am entirely at your disposal.—No?—Well then, let us make the best of our way forward, and I will make myself as agreeable as I can. Shall I carry your parasol for you?—you wont let me—come, then, that little bag; I long

to be of service. Are there any sandwiches in it?"

"As if I should carry sandwiches!" said Rosina half-laughing.

"It might be worse filled, though—this air is what Mr. Greenway calls 'very appetizing.' Are you quite sure you are not deceiving me? No—here are a cambric handkerchief, a smelling-bottle, and some keys—oh, I understand; pockets are gone out of fashion."

"You are mistaken, there are no keys."

"Are there not? I thought there were. By the by, Rosina, I have some news for you."

"Have you?"

"Yes—concerning an old flirt and favourite of yours. Can you guess whom I mean?"

"No indeed."

"Try."

"An old favourite?"

"And flirt too—very, very old."

"I am sure I cannot imagine," said Rosina, carelessly, "unless it is Lewis Pennington."

"*Unless!* that is a lucky guess of yours, Rosina. Yes, Lewis Pennington it is. I had a letter from him this morning. He has left Oxford, and writes to tell me that—what do you think?"

"How can I tell what to think? Lewis and I used to be very good friends when we were children, but really that is so long ago, that I have nearly forgotten him. How can I guess what he has written about?"

"'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?'" repeated Mr. Russell; "but indeed, Rosina, you must shew a little more curiosity respecting my intelligence before I communicate it. News, you know, is a London staple; and as silks, ribbons, bobbins, every thing from the great metropolis, has a neat little profit tacked on to it by the country retailer, so news is by far too scarce an article in a small hamlet, to be disposed of for nothing. Come, guess, guess!—I had nearly said 'an' thou lovest me.'"

Certainly Mr. Russell seems a little touched this morning, thought Rosina: what can have made him so exceedingly absurd?

"I suppose," said she with as unconcerned a tone and look as possible, "Lewis is going to be married. If that is not it, I have nothing else to guess. Whatever it is, I care very little about it."

"Can that be true, Rosina?"

"Quite true, I assure you, Mr. Russell."

"Oh, very well!" said he with a mischievous smile, "I will not waste my news on a person who does not care for it; and if, as I shrewdly suspect, this indifference is only assumed, you will deservedly punish yourself. Take care, however, that the news, when it *does* reach you, as reach you it certainly will, does not come on you like a thunderbolt."

"A thunderbolt! how absurd!" said Rosina.

"We shall see!" said Mr. Russell, smiling.

He then continued to walk on, silently knocking about the flints and pebbles which lay in the path with his cane; till Rosina, who was secretly curious to know his mighty intelligence, asked him if he expected, like the Duke in "As you like it," to find a sermon in the stones.

"Why, possibly this flint," said Mr. Russell, picking one up from beneath his feet, "might, if it had a tongue, chatter quite as much to the purpose as many bipeds. 'For what reason,' we may imagine it to exclaim, 'am I left here in inglorious solitude, wedged in coarse marle, or kicked out of the way by every clouted peasant that crosses this path to pursue his daily labour, when many other flints, by no means so comely as myself, are se-

lected by the partial hand of man to raise the cottage wall, or emit the generous spark?' Ah, foolish flint! you know not of what you complain. Borne hence in the object of your ambition, viz., the flint-gatherer's basket, you would find yourself exposed to many rude buffets in that world which, at distance seen, so allures your inexperienced imagination. Hard blows from the workman's trowel, or stunning thumps against the sturdy steel, administered by the greasy hands of a cookmaid; and even in repose—what repose! the filthy darkness of a kitchen drawer! Be grateful to me, mistress Flint, for restoring you to your inglorious but peaceful abode in the footpath, where the soft breeze blows over you, the blue sky shines above you, and the gorse and heather bloom at your side; and know that your fate is a type of many a charming fair who sighs for the gaiety of high life, but is luckily condemned to remain in that seclusion where, would she but discover it, the truest happiness is to be found! Well, Rosina, have I discoursed most eloquent nonsense?"

"Certainly, Mr. Russell," said she, smiling, as she felt her ill-humour rapidly thawing away, "you

are a very odd sort of person, and though you like teazing a little sometimes, it is impossible to be out of temper with you long together."

"Out of temper!" exclaimed he; "'do you confess so much? Give me thy hand!' Come, Rosina, answer as Brutus did,

'And my heart with it!'

I will put no unfair interpretation on the words, I promise you. You won't? Well then, I must say that you are a very odd sort of person too, and that it is impossible to be out of temper with *you* long together. We have made up our reconciliation just in time; for sure enough there is the donkey chaise where you said it would be, at the foot of the white-thorn hill. So now it will be but fair that Hannah and Huntley should be left to toil in the rear as we have done, while Mrs. Wellford, you, and I ascend the hill with the speed of the wind."

Not even the conclusion of this speech could now put Rosina out of humour. She walked forward briskly, and they soon came up with the donkey-chaise party, who looked the picture of content.

Huntley ran towards Rosina as she approached, and offered her his arm. Thus supported on either side, she told Hannah she could very well walk up the hill, though her late complaints to Mr. Russell shamed her from again maintaining that she felt no fatigue. They all proceeded to their place of destination; Rosina conversing with Huntley in high spirits, and in the overflowing of her satisfaction, bestowing many smiles and lively sallies on Mr. Russell.

"Aha!" thought he to himself, "my young lady is fairly caught for the present; but it will not last long, and I know why!"

Without stopping to search into the meaning of this mysterious "I know why," we must proceed to the summit of the hill, where Mr. Huntley, as all had expected, was much struck with the view which opened before him. It was too extensive, however, he said, to be a fit subject for a sketch: it was vast, but not picturesque. Much was discussed, learnedly and unlearnedly, on *coups d'œil*, grand masses, broken foregrounds, light and shade. At length Mrs. Wellford proposed returning.

"Mr. Russell does not seem quite ready to go,"

observed Rosina. "See how pensively he stands with folded arms, quite absorbed in meditation! What are you considering, Mr. Russell?"

"Nothing very particular," replied he, turning round with a smile, "I was merely letting myself be breathed on by this delicious wind; or if I was thinking at all, I believe it was that I felt rather hungry."

"What a poetical confession!" exclaimed Rosina; "I expected to find you had been engaged in some very sublime speculation."

"Give me leave to ask, Miss Rosina Wellford, have *you dined?*"

"Yes, I have."

"Well, I have not; therefore, the next time we compare the relative sublimity of our ideas, pray let us start fair on this point. At present, you have the advantage of me."

The laugh was now against Rosina. Hannah offered to walk, and her younger sister seated herself in the chaise without complaint. The walkers and riders kept more together on their return than they had done before; and on reaching the White Cottage they separated with mutual expressions of satisfaction at their excursion.

CHAPTER XI.

PAINTING AL FRESCO.

THE request was made and finally granted. Huntley, whose secret admiration of Hannah was daily acquiring greater warmth and reality, at first playfully, then seriously, entreated her to sit to him for her picture, and begged Mrs. Wellford to add her persuasions to his own. The mother's pride in her daughter's beauty was gratified; she was also gained by Huntley's manner; which seemed to attach just sufficient, without too great, importance to the favour—respectful and unpresuming, though tinctured with enthusiasm. Hannah was astonished at the proposal, and shrunk with natural aversion from deliberately sitting to be looked at; but when Huntley smilingly said he would not insist on her fixing her eyes on his ugly face, lamented the difficulty of finding good studies,

and in conclusion, proposed some fancy subject in which he might also introduce the portraits of her mother and sister, Hannah softened, and at length yielded a reluctant consent. The subject was rapidly chosen by the enthusiastic painter. It should be the departure of Ruth and Naomi for the Holy Land, and their parting from Orpah. Hannah's exquisite head was not of the oriental style, but no matter; its character admirably expressed the moral beauty, grace, dignity, and devotedness of the lovely Moabitess. Rosina's darker complexion would suit the affectionate though inconstant Orpah excellently well; and Mrs. Wellford's deeply shadowed eyes and expressive countenance beneath a Jewish head-dress could not fail to give interest to Naomi. Rosina was enchanted with the subject, and her mother and sister were scarcely less struck with Huntley's genius, when they saw his rough sketch from the text, "Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clave unto her." The woman of many sorrows was seen turning her cheek to the retiring Orpah, while Ruth, supporting her arm and waist, looked up in her face with tender devotedness as she prepared to lead her faultering

steps through the scorching desert which opened before them. In the distance, amid palms and terebinths, were seen the walls and towers of the city to which Orpah was returning, while overhead was the glowing sky of an eastern climate. Nothing had been forgotten which was necessary to the complete developement of the scene. Rosina saw at a glance, that Huntley's sketch of her figure possessed much of the *beau ideal*, and attributed to his partiality what she should rather have laid to his science. The pannel, colours, and brushes, arrived in a few days from town: the former not exceeding the size of a cabinet picture, as Huntley maintained that what would be gained by increased space, would be lost in delicacy, and that grandeur of design might as well be compressed into a gem as expanded on an altar-piece. The question now became, where should the sittings take place? The parlour was too small to render the apparatus of oil-painting very convenient or the smell very endurable; besides which, the casement-window, clustered with jessamine, did not admit a sufficiently broad light. It was unanimously resolved to place the easel in the garden beneath the huge walnut tree.

The hedge was so high and thick, as to prevent much chance of being overlooked; but with the assistance of Betty's clothes-props, lines, and pegs, a sufficiently picturesque drapery was stretched beneath the greenwood-tree to screen them entirely from observation, and prevent the fluttering of the leaves from interrupting the light. Rosina, delighted with the romance and novelty of the plan, the more so that it had been suggested by the painter himself, thought of many little improvements, which she effected with great ingenuity and self-approval. Behold, then, the artist-lover, the walnut-shade his studio, the sun and air the ready dryers of his colours, and the green foliage and purple distance the appropriate back-ground of his '*tableau vivante.*' Rosina twined her mother an exquisite turban from Huntley's fancy sketch; the sketch was improved from the turban, and the turban again from the sketch, so that no head-dress could be more faultless. It seemed a sin to cover more of Hannah's silky tresses than was absolutely necessary, with a muslin veil, carelessly thrown back; and Rosina wound a crimson scarf around her own dark braids in a manner which she defied Mr. Huntley to

prove had never been the fashion in Moab, and which was too becoming for him seriously to cavil at. An hour was spent in arranging every thing conveniently; in making the easel stand firm on the uneven ground; in picking the teazing little flies out of Huntley's oils and paints; and in contriving that the sun should shine on the ladies without tanning or blinding them. All these difficulties being mastered, Huntley commenced his work with the most commendable alacrity. Of the three sitters, or rather *standers*, Rosina had certainly secretly felt by far the greatest pleasure at the idea of having her picture taken by Mr. Huntley; yet, sooth to say, she was first to feel tired. What she would have liked would have been to sit in a chair, so that she could see the artist; and every other minute to jump up and watch his progress: instead of which, till the outline was got in, Huntley begged them all to stand as still as possible, in easy attitudes, which, as she truly observed, "were mighty difficult," her lips on the point of touching her mother's cheek, and her figure in such a graceful twist as to give her an intolerable pain in the side. To do him justice, Huntley allowed them a momentary change

of posture every five minutes, and promised to relieve two of the three in a quarter of an hour: but his often repeated "one minute more" lasted much longer than he had led them to believe, and the earnestness with which he worked made him terribly silent. At length the ladies were released from their purgatory; the general effect, he told them, was obtained; and they gathered round the easel to wonder and admire. Their encomiums were such as might have satisfied any man not bent on insisting that his admirers should be thoroughly competent judges of his art; the picture was "lovely," "striking," "astonishing." Huntley now began to bring up the back-ground to the same state of forwardness with the figures; during which time, the ladies, much interested in the novel handling of a kind of colours entirely new to them, watched his progress and expressed their delight at every new effect. Hannah went away, and presently returned with some beautiful raspberries. Rosina observed it was a good thought, and ran off to gather enough for the whole party. Meantime, Hannah had given a few to her mother, and was going to offer the re-

mainder to Mr. Huntley, when she blushed slightly, and said she would fetch a plate.

"As if," said Huntley, stopping her and looking expressively, "the finest china would make them more acceptable!"

Hannah coloured again, but gave him the fruit with perfect simplicity; and Rosina soon returned with a more abundant supply. They carelessly laughed and chatted till all the raspberries were eaten, and Huntley then returned to his work, which he pursued till the village clock warned him and his charming companions that they must separate for dinner. In the afternoon, Mrs. Wellford desired her daughters to carry a trifling message to Mrs. Greenway. They were just quitting the cottage when they met Mr. Huntley at the door. "He had just looked in," he said, "not to paint, but to see his morning's work with fresh eyes." They all accompanied him to the walnut-tree, beneath which it still stood, that the sun might dry it quickly; and notwithstanding his resolution, the pallet offered itself so temptingly to his hand that he could not resist touching up something which it would be a pity to leave in its

present state. Once with the magic brush in his fingers, it seemed impossible to lay it down; and Hannah deceived at first into the belief that his one minute would literally consist only of sixty seconds, aroused herself from her trance and reminded Rosina of their mission.

"Are you going?" said Huntley pathetically.

"Indeed, Mr. Huntley," said Mrs. Wellford, who had never seen painting thus taken by storm, and began to be alarmed for his health, "I think it would be much better for you to lay aside your brushes and take a walk also. You have painted many hours and I am sure your mind must want unbending."

Huntley's brushes were immediately relinquished. Whether Mrs. Wellford had intended that *his* walk should be in the same direction with her daughters', or not, he chose to understand that it was to be so, and the pallet was instantly cleared. He requested the young ladies to grant him one more minute's patience; and as soon as his brushes were washed, he accompanied them on their walk. A lovely day was now giving place to a still more lovely evening, and the spirits and tempers of the trio were in happy tune.

Rosina's first enquiry was, "Pray, Mr. Huntley, are you a prophet?"

"Not that I am aware of," replied he alertly, as if preparing for an encounter of wits.—"If I were, I would tell your fortune immediately; but what occasioned the question?"

"Simply because the prophets of old used to reckon years as days; and your *minutes* seemed to me to bear the same proportion to ordinary estimates of time."

Huntley laughed, though he did not appear exactly to know to what she referred.

"Mr. Huntley does not understand you, Rosina," said Hannah, with a quiet smile that seemed to say '*I* do.'

"Why, have you not often threatened me with a *minute's* drawing-lesson," pursued Rosina, "which has as often been lengthened into an hour? and did you not cheat poor Hannah into standing twenty minutes in a most uncomfortable position by telling her she should be released from it in a moment? Did you not mean to paint only a minute this afternoon, and to be occupied another minute in washing your brushes?"

Huntley now laughed gaily. "The fact is,"

said he, "that it is impossible to take note of time in the Misses Wellfords' society."

"Ah, Mr. Huntley, I dare say you use all your sitters just as unfairly."

"Perhaps I do,—when they fascinate me equally,—I leave you to decide how often that is likely to be the case."

"Painting must be a very fascinating pursuit," said Hannah, trying to turn the conversation to generals.

"Undoubtedly it must be," said Rosina—"Oh! there is Mrs. Greenway, I declare! Just going into Mrs. Good's. I must try to deliver mamma's message before the servant opens the door."

Away she ran, leaving Hannah and Mr. Huntley to follow her at their leisure. They did so in perfect silence, though Huntley longed to speak. Just as he had thought of something to say to his beautiful companion, they were rejoined by Rosina.

"This is certainly too warm weather for running!" exclaimed she.

"There is no need of our going to Mrs. Greenway's now," said Hannah. "What shall we do? Go home?"

"Home!" exclaimed both her companions at once.

"Surely not," said Huntley.

"Where shall we go then?" inquired Hannah.

"Let us sit down on the bench just beneath the churchyard," said Rosina, "till I have recovered myself, and then we can go into Okely Park. We have scarcely walked half a mile."

They accordingly proceeded to the seat, which had been erected by some forgotten emulator of the Man of Ross. It was nearly at the point where Mr. Russell had first seen Huntley.

"How pleasant rest is when we are tired!" said Rosina.

"Yes, and how pleasant recreation is when we have earned it by industry!" said Huntley. "Even *alone*, such weather and scenery as this would be delightful; but with companions, feminine companions!—One is so glad, too, of having gained a point: I began to be afraid, at *one* time, Miss Wellford, that I should leave Summerfield without having painted your picture."

Hannah felt she was expected to speak, yet knew not exactly what to say. She was not so

ready in framing playful disclamatory speeches as her sister.

"It was a bold project, certainly," pursued Huntley. "How many arguments and persuasions, how many little arts was I obliged to use, before I could attain it!" He looked at her with a smile full of earnest meaning, and Hannah's eyes sank to the ground. Rosina saw the look. 'I am glad—yes, I am glad,' thought she, 'that he does justice to Hannah's beauty—no painter could fail to admire that sweet countenance; but his conversation, his instruction, and his playful wit, are all reserved for me.' While trying to convince herself that this was really the case, she was unconscious how long they had sat in thoughtful silence, when quick cheerful voices, at no great distance, roused each of them from their reveries; and looking round, they perceived Mr. Russell and another gentleman passing through the church-yard gate. "Another *rara avis?*" thought Hannah, as she rose to pursue her walk; while Rosina gave a look, first of careless inquiry, and next of half-doubting surprise, at the stranger. He was a tall, striking looking young man of about one and twenty, with a prepossessing coun-

tenance, which at this moment was beaming with gaiety and good humour. "Hannah! Hannah!" exclaimed Rosina, in a suppressed but energetic tone, "I think,—yes, I am sure,—it is Lewis Pennington!"

Lewis, who could hardly have recognized Rosina, had he not been told by his companion that the two young ladies before him were the Misses Wellfords, approached with a gladness of manner equally free from embarrassment and exaggeration. "Rosina!" said he, half doubtful of being remembered. Her bright glance instantly shewed that she knew him perfectly well, and she held out her hand with a smile of pleasure, as she said, "Who would have thought of seeing you in Summerfield, Mr. Pennington?" She immediately introduced him to her sister, and named to him Mr. Huntley, whom Lewis Pennington measured with his eye from head to foot, as he bowed to him with great grace but a little haughtiness.

"This spot seems destined for the scene of pleasant meetings," said Mr. Russell to Huntley with a smile. Then turning to Rosina, "Well," said he, did not I serve you right in not telling you that your old playfellow and *preux chevalier*

was coming to the vicarage? You remember the provocation."

Rosina coloured. "We were just coming to call on you," pursued Mr. Russell; "shall we all proceed to the White Cottage together, or have you any other plan in view?"

"We will return, by all means," said Hannah. Huntley immediately offered her his arm, and she accepted it with a slight blush; wondering whether Mr. Russell would think it strange. Lewis and Rosina led the way, he drawing her arm beneath his with the security of an old friend, and marvelling at the growth and exceeding prettiness of the little girl whom he had so often tempted into or extricated from scrapes, as events might happen; while she, with a thousand questions relative to Stoke Barton acquaintance hovering on her lips, scarcely felt sufficiently at ease with him to give them utterance. Five minutes sufficed to shew however that if Lewis had added some inches to his height and some manhood to his countenance and carriage since they had last seen each other, his manners were nearly as carelessly boyish as ever. Meanwhile they

were putting a gradually increasing space between themselves and the more leisurely walkers behind.

"What was that Mr. Russell said about *provocation?*" said Lewis, smiling archly after answering a few of her inquiries respecting his family.

"Provocation?" repeated Rosina, affecting forgetfulness.

"Yes, something in connexion with you and me, was it not? Ah, you remember it, I see, by your blushing."

"Blush, Mr. Pennington!" said Rosina disdainfully, "I assure you I do no such thing."

"Nay, no offence, Rosina," replied, he with perfect complacence. "Even if I judged wrongly, you know the mistake did not amount to a crime. Dr. what's his name—the oracle of you ladies—Dr. Gregory says, that a blush is the most powerful charm of beauty. At least I have Marianne's authority for saying so, for you may be sure I never read his precious stuff about friendship, love, and matrimony, myself. But *Mr. Pennington?* What do you mean by that? Not to affront me, I hope. You know we are cousins; and I do not mean to relinquish my cousinly privilege

of calling you Rosina, I assure you. And I hope that to you I shall always be Lewis, as I was in old times. Dear old times, I was going to call them; but they were not very dear to you who were so brutally treated by Mrs. Parkinson. By the by, that woman, whom I have never forgiven, has left Park Place, time indefinite, to wander up and down the face of the earth, felicity hunting, with her poor worn-out husband and old Mrs. Diana. A charming party to travel over the continent with; don't you think so? I was rather astonished they did not invite Mr. Curtis to make a fourth, for Mrs. Parkinson can scarcely bear him to be out of her sight; but perhaps Curtis was wise and preferred peace and quiet to an annuity."

"But Lewis, you have not told me a word of dear Marianne."

"Oh, Marianne is as much altered as you are, though the girl will never be handsome. However, she is sharp and good-humoured, which does quite as well for a sister. My father is not a day older than when you saw him, and as lively and indulgent as ever. I was the envy of half the men in Oxford, in that respect. Nothing to do

but to write for money, and it was sure to come without any sermonizing. To be sure, he once made me feel rather ashamed of myself—"

"How was that?" inquired Rosina.

"Oh," said Lewis laughing, and switching the hedge with his cane, "the long and the short of the business was, that I had been extravagant; and actually felt myself blushing as red as fire when I wrote for fresh supplies. I half expected they would not be remitted: however, the letter came with the needful inclosure, and a line to say that Dr. Pennington had great pleasure in paying his son's *necessary* expenses, though the poor must this winter suffer for it, and that, to be sure, the *repetition* of such a demand as the last would oblige him to put down his carriage, a very needless luxury to a hale old man and four healthy females. How hot I felt at that moment! Bills must be paid, you know; there was no help for that; but I was as stingy as Harpagon all the rest of the term; and the next time I saw my father, I wrung his hand and vowed I never would exceed my allowance again. He hoped I should keep my promise, wished he could afford me more, and we were as good friends as ever."

"Dear, excellent man! But your mother, Lewis, and your brothers and sisters—"

"Oh, Ned is at Madras; Sophy and Isabella are with Caroline at the Isle of Wight, recruiting their complexions after a London campaign, and the young ones are pursuing the same routine under Mademoiselle Mackau as we did before them. By the by, that Frenchwoman wears uncommonly well. What with her rouge and false hair, nobody would suppose her more than thirty; and she dresses with as much coquettish precision as ever."

"Rouge! has Mademoiselle Mackau taken to rouge?"

"My father and mother cry 'pshaw! nonsense! no such thing!' but Marianne and I am convinced of it. You know what teeth and eyes she has. When I first came home, Mademoiselle positively looked so handsome that I had a great mind to strike up a flirtation; but considering that she had helped me through the hard words in 'L'Ami des Enfans,' it proved too ridiculous. However, we still often have a little *scene*. Mademoiselle stands secure in the consciousness of having refused

several good offers, and has no objection to a little harmless rattle."

"We have quite outwalked Hannah and Mr. Russell," said Rosina, looking back; "shall we not wait for them?"

"Certainly we will. What a sweet countenance your sister has! And who is that Mr. Hunter? Are they engaged?"

"Oh dear no!"

"Oh dear no?" repeated he, laughing, "that look and tone give me reason to suspect something in another quarter."

"You may suspect whatever you like, but you are talking quite at random."

"Oh, I shall be more *au fait* by and by: I have pretty quick eyes, and shall make my silent observations."

"Silent observations! horrible!" exclaimed Rosina. "Pray do not trouble yourself to do any thing so disagreeable."

"Oh, I shall not mind its being disagreeable," said Lewis.

"But I shall, I assure you," cried Rosina, "for nothing is so—"

"So what?"

She did not reply, and he maliciously continued, "Oh, I shall keep a good look-out on this Mr. Hunter. Is he one of the neighbouring gentry?"

"No."

"Where is he staying then?"

"At the inn."

"Oh!"

At this moment, the person in question, together with Hannah and Mr. Russell came within ear-shot. They were speaking of Huntley's picture, which Mr. Russell was curious to see.

"What is this picture they are talking of?" inquired Lewis of Rosina as they pursued their walk.

"Oh, a beautiful painting of Mr. Huntley's, in which he is introducing all our likenesses."

"Soho!" cried Lewis, raising his eyebrows, "then he is nothing but a portrait painter after all!"

"Hush, Lewis, he will overhear you. You are mistaken."

"What, is he only an amateur, then?"

"Why,—not exactly.—He is a very distinguished artist."

"I never heard his name," observed Lewis drily.

"You will, some of these days," said Rosina with quickness; "Mr. Russell says he is a very great genius."

"I am glad to hear it," replied Lewis.

"As a proof of it," continued Rosina, "he not only paints but is extremely well read in poetry and the classics, knows a great deal of history, and sings delightfully. I am even not quite sure that he does not write verses."

"So much the worse for his painting," said Lewis.

"Not at all," cried Rosina, "an artist, as well as every one else, must have occasional recreations; and how much better are these than gambling and associating with low company?"

"Perhaps he may do that too."

"I am certain he does not."

"Oh," said Lewis with a smile," I see you are talking of Mr. Hunter. I thought you were speaking of artists in general. Heaven forbid that I should accuse or suspect a man of whom I know nothing, and who may be better than

myself. It would be ill-bred as well as illiberal for me to pretend to judge of Mr. Hunter—"

"Mr. Huntley."

"Huntley, I beg his pardon.—Of Mr. Huntley's merits or demerits. What do I know of him? By the by, that is a pretty little cottage—"

"That is *our* cottage," said Rosina, feeling rather ashamed of it for the first time. "It is very small—"

"But quite large enough for happiness, without doubt. Oh, I am quite an advocate for cottages, I assure you. To say truth, I went through a pretty severe course of novels last winter, when I had a sprained ancle."

"Ah! mamma has had the tea things placed under the walnut tree!" cried Rosina joyfully. "How very pleasant."

CHAPTER XII.

A TEA-PARTY UNDER A WALNUT TREE.

Mrs. Wellford had expected Huntley to return with her daughters, but she was rather surprised to see an addition of two gentlemen to the party, and still more surprised to be introduced to Lewis Pennington. As the son of an old and highly valued friend, and in some sort as a relation, she gave him a most cordial reception, and immediately expressed her hope that he and Mr. Russell would join their little tea-party. Every one was pleased with the idea of drinking tea out of doors; and Hannah, having laid aside her bonnet and parasol, took her accustomed seat as president.

So many inquiries after Stoke Barton friends required answers from Lewis, that the picture was at first forgotten. Mr. Russell at length

looked round for it, and Huntley brought it from the house.

Mr. Russell was even more struck with the painting than had been expected, and seemed scarcely to know which most to praise, the design or the execution. Huntley was gratified by his criticisms, which were those of a man of taste though not a connoisseur. Lewis was disposed to be pleased with every thing, yet he could not make due allowances for the first stage of colour, and cavilled at the brickdust hue of Orpah's complexion. He said he should like to have been reminded of Sir Joshua Reynolds's colouring, rather than of the dirty Jewesses in Monmouth-street, and advised Mr. Huntley to inquire of Fuseli where "a velvet brush dipped in honey" was to be found. He should paint Miss Rosina Wellford's portrait with no other. Rosina said "pshaw!" but Lewis did not think she looked very angry. They were now summoned by Hannah to the tea-table.

"And pray, Lewis, how came Summerfield to be honoured by your presence?" inquired Mrs. Wellford; "was this excursion premeditated, or *al improviso?*"

He laughed and replied, "Oh, there was nothing to keep me at home, and Russell had written such fluent praises of this part of the country, that I thought I should like to come and look about me. Next year I shall travel; and it is foolish of a man to go abroad before he has seen his own country."

"Are you going then, to make the tour of England?"

"Why—I don't exactly know about that—I shall probably go a little further west, and loiter about for a few weeks, here and there, wherever I find any thing to please me."

"How extremely like he is to his mother!" said Mrs. Wellford to Mr. Russell. "The same eyes——"

"Not quite," said Lewis, "her's are dark blue, and mine are grey. I do not wish my eyes to deceive you, ma'am, even in colour."

"And yet, again, your nose is certainly something of the doctor's——"

"I had rather be like him in any thing else," observed Lewis slily. "What do you say, Rosina? You have seen my father since Mrs. Wellford has. Are our noses alike?"

"I am sure I do not know," said Rosina, in a tone as if she had never seen a nose in her life.

"'Betwixt eyes and nose a strange contest arose,'" said Lewis, laughing; "and I deny that mine has that venerable arch in the middle, or that rotundity at the lower extremity which characterizes my father's organ of scent. Nay, if I have any vanity, it is of this very feature; and when I swear, (which I assure you, ladies, is but seldom,) it is always 'by my nose.'"

"You need not be affronted, Lewis, at being thought like your father, for at the time I married, he was a very handsome man."

"So he is still, for his age; but my mother, I think, is more altered, though her manner is as full of cheerfulness and sweetness as ever. Her's has been a life of more anxiety and care; she has had a large family to attend to, and a great deal of ill health. Thank God, she is now tolerably well, but I do not know what she would have done with us all if it had not been for Mademoiselle Mackau."

"Your mother was a charming woman when I knew her."

"So she is, ma'am, to this day. I did not always

know her value. Rosina may remember that, as children, we always had her rather more in dread than my father. Well, when I had been from home a few months, I began, like many other fools, to think it was exceedingly weak of me to be held any longer in petticoat thraldom, and resolved quietly to throw aside the yoke at the first opportunity. Will you believe it?—on returning with my tastes somewhat matured, and my knowledge of men and women more enlarged, I found myself for the first time capable of appreciating this admirable mother, and aware of the distinction of possessing her friendship. Stay, surely she charged me with a letter to you. I believe it is in my portmanteau. Is this it?—Oh no, this is one to you, Rosina, from Marianne, which had slipped my memory. I now recollect her stuffing something into my pocket just as I was mounting my horse, with some injunction which I had not time to listen to."

"For shame!" cried Rosina, tearing it open, "I dare say you have forgotten some message which I should have thought of great importance."

"If I had known it had been for you," replied he, "I would have paid more attention to her,

certainly, but I thought she had merely been giving me some biscuits to prevent my starving on the road. Marianne has always so many 'last words' when I am on the point of setting out on a ride, either a charge to scold the woman at the library for not sending her the last volume of some novel, or a message to the milliner, or a note to drop at aunt Margaret's, that I now only hear her mechanically, and cry 'ay, ay, depend upon me,' without being quite clear whether I am to go to the aunt's, the milliner's, or the librarian's."

"You do not deserve such a sister as Marianne, I am afraid, Lewis," said Mr. Russell.

"Nobody deserves her!" replied he with energy.

"Nobody in Stoke Barton, you mean. I hope she is not of your way of thinking."

"Pretty nearly so, I believe—she is inexorable."

"Rosina used to describe you and your sister Marianne as nearly inseparable," said Hannah.

"So we are still, when I am at home," replied he. "My father says that Marianne-and-Lewis seem always connected with hyphens."

"Quite like Viola and Sebastian," said Huntley.

"Not exactly," said Lewis—"their resemblance

was more of person than mind—ours is more of mind than person."

Rosina had now hastily skimmed the contents of her letter. A few lines towards the conclusion made her blush rosy red; and wishing to appear unconcerned, she said as she folded it up, "You seem to have had a very gay spring at Stoke Barton."

"Such gaiety as a country town always affords," answered Lewis—"a regular succession of parties, beginning with the Sewards and ending with the Trotters."

"Seward? Trotter?" repeated Mrs. Wellford—"there were no such names in the town when I left Park Place."

"And yet we count them among our old established set now. Oh, there are many among us, compared with whom, the Sewards and Trotters are quite antique. I dare say, Mrs. Wellford, you would hardly know Stoke Barton again—four or five-and-twenty years in these stirring times make an immense difference. I myself can recollect when we had neither circulating library, music shop, nor savings' bank; when Cotton Row was

not built; when there was only one pastry-cook's, one linen-draper's, and one tallow-chandler's! Now we have two handsome inns, two apothecaries, a physician, and a silversmith! Does not that speak for the growing importance of Stoke Barton? But you would see no alteration in Park Place. It stands aloof from the town with the same demure dignity as ever, and the stately old trees have not as yet become the prey of a thriftless heir. Young James Parkinson perhaps, may make the axe play among them freely some of these days."

"I hope not," said Mrs. Wellford.

"So do I," said Lewis, "for I have lain so often under their shade, that I look upon them in some measure as my own property."

"If such a claim as that could be made good in a court of law," said Huntley, "I should have as pretty an estate as any man in the kingdom."

"Possession is nine points of the law," said Lewis, "and there is many a rock in the woods of Park Place which I and the squirrels have hitherto had to ourselves;—a certain bank, in particular, that will always be associated in my mind with Froissart."

"Ah! how often have I wished to read Froissart!" exclaimed Rosina.

"I think you would be disappointed in him," said Huntley.

"Disappointed in Froissart!" exclaimed Lewis. "I can only say that *I* devoured his pages with the keenest delight, and that his chronicle appeared to me the most vivid and entertaining picture of the times that could well be imagined."

"And what times were they?" rejoined Huntley. "Times when every public and private duty was violated and the most atrocious crimes committed without exciting surprise."

"Times full of romantic incident, however," said Lewis.

"Yes, the incidents were romautic; but Froissart has a dry, uninteresting way of telling them. How much more he might have made of some of his stories, by inserting some particulars and omitting many others!"

"You are difficult to please, sir. To me, I must confess, his gossipping style has something quaint, racy, and delightful. He tells you the whole affair from beginning to end, so that it seems to rise before your eyes—how that Sir John

Chandos sat at meat when young Earl Pembroke's page, after a night of peril, brought him the token ring—how he washed his hands, and sat moodily deliberating before he resolved to forget old affronts and go to the earl's assistance. All this gives a great deal of spirit and life—"

"But does not argue much more genius for narration than that possessed by every old nurse. —He makes no selection. A modern writer would select."

"And leave nothing but the bare skeleton," said Lewis. "I like dead heroes to stand before me in all the reality of flesh and blood. How I revelled over the exploits of that old Sir John Chandos! And how I loved the pleasant stories of Sir Espaign de Lyon as he and Froissart rode at a bridle pace beside some fair river! How I enjoyed the gossipry of the gallant squires and pages, as they sat round the fire at the court of Bearn, each man telling his tale of war or love! How my blood curdled at the murder of little Gaston de Foix! Do you find any thing more poetical in Chaucer? Ah! a man must be fastidious who cannot relish Froissart! How say *you*, Russell?"

"To tell you the truth, Lewis," replied Mr. Russell, "I never read Froissart!"

The tea equipage being now removed, Hannah brought her mother's work-bag and her own netting from the parlour, and accepted Lewis's offer of holding the skein of silk she was about to wind. On looking round when his task was half finished, Lewis perceived that Mr. Huntley was helping Rosina to water her flowers, and he immediately began to wish himself at liberty. As soon as he was released, he walked towards the flower border, and seeing a pretty rose, he stopped to gather it

"Oh Lewis," cried Rosina, in terror, part real and part affected, "you positively shall not have that Provençe rose! it is the only one I have.—Any other that you will, moss, damask, or China."

"With all my heart," said Lewis; "a rose, gathered by myself, would do only to smell twice or thrice and throw over the hedge; whereas one presented by you will have an extrinsic value."

"It is a Spanish compliment you know, to give a rose to a stranger."

"Are you resolved to call *me* one?"

"Well, which colour will you have?"

"The colour of the lips of a young lady of my acquaintance—no; not that—it is too pale."

"How can I tell what colour you mean?" said Rosina, stooping over her roses; "will this do?"

"Yes," said he softly; taking the rose, and playfully approaching it to her lips. Rosina hastily turned away and nearly ran against Mr. Huntley, who was returning with her replenished watering pot.

"Are you giving away flowers, Miss Rosina, like another Perdita?" said he. "I am sure I have earned one."

"No, no," said Lewis, laughing, "they are all for me."

"How can you say so?" said Rosina scornfully. "Mr. Huntley *has* earned one very fairly. Here, Mr. Huntley, is a perfect beauty! You deserve one for filling my watering-pot."

"This is lovely enough to inspire a troubadour," said Huntley; and he immediately began to hum

"Oh! my love is like the red, red rose!"

His balmy voice reached the party under the walnut tree; Mr. Russell called out to beg he

would "go on;" and laughing, "as though he scorned himself for" singing, Huntley continued with more emphasis though still in an apparently careless *sotto voce* manner, to run through the second verse of the ballad. No woman, musical enough to appreciate simple melody, and youthful enough to believe in the possibility of her having excited interest in the young painter's heart, could have listened unmoved to his enunciation of

> "And I will love thee still, my dear,
> Till the sands of life are run."

Its pathos was attested by a gentle sigh from the bosoms of each of the younger ladies; and Lewis with an impatient suspiration, wished fate had enabled him to sing as well; and then quieted himself by doubting whether it were a manly accomplishment. Rosina, after having with unusual benevolence, watered Hannah's flowers as well as her own, returned quite tired but in unexhausted spirits, to rest beneath the walnut tree. The moon presently rose brightly from behind the hills, and Mrs. Wellford thought it time to return to the house. This movement was received by the gen-

tlemen as a hint to wish good evening, which they accordingly did, after waiting to see the moon enter a fleecy cloud, and to make rival quotations from Milton, Byron, and Pope. The last "good night" was said and smiled; Lewis still lingered to utter *more last words*, while Mr. Russell led the way up the lane and called Huntley's attention to the glow-worms sparkling on the banks.

"What an entertaining day this has been!" exclaimed Rosina, as she laid her head upon her pillow.

Lewis's opinion of it had not been very dissimilar. "What a smile Rosina Wellford has!" exclaimed he abruptly, after Huntley had quitted them. "She is so much altered since I last saw her that I should scarcely have known her again. As for her mind, that is altered too; however, I have watched its developement in her letters—"

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Russell with surprise, "did you correspond?"

"No, no; her letters to Marianne, which I often saw, though without Rosina's guessing it. Why, they were living pictures! Not a corner of this village, not a creature who inhabits it, not a

tea party at Lady Worral's, or a visit from you, Russell," added he laughing, "that was not recorded."

"I have often thought," said Mr. Russell rather gravely, "that Rosina was inclined to be satirical, but I did not imagine she allowed her liveliness to carry her these lengths."

"But not a word of ill-nature in them," interposed Lewis. "They were faultless in that respect; and the ardent affection they discovered towards her mother and sister, I have this evening seen displayed with my own eyes. I like the elder sister too; she reminds one of Milton's description of Melancholy, though there is nothing melancholy about her. She seems

'devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure.'"

"Hannah's character deserves all those epithets except the last," said Mr. Russell, "which in common parlance stands for a sort of affected modesty, whereas hers is completely woven into her mind, and is too intrinsic to be worn as a mere ornament. Rosina has more natural vanity—"

"She has more to be vain of," observed Lewis.

"And often says, does, and fancies things,"

continued Mr. Russell, "which would never enter Hannah's imagination; but her innocence of mind and natural vivacity of disposition, form, I think, her best apologists; and as her experience and power of reflection increase, she will, if she has sufficient strength of mind to correct her little foibles, become a very enchanting character."

"I perfectly agree with you!" cried Lewis with energy; "yes, yes, she will, as you say, become an enchanting character; and I hate a perfect woman!"

CHAPTER XIII.

NUT CRACKING.

THIS had been a day of unusual excitement at the White Cottage; nor did it seem likely that events would very soon return to their former sleepy course. Huntley's picture and Lewis Pennington's arrival formed ample subject for conversation at Mrs. Wellford's breakfast table the ensuing morning; and before eleven o'clock, the artist came to request his sitters to resume their attitudes. Lewis soon arrived with his mother's letter, and was delighted to watch Huntley's progress; and in the course of the afternoon, Matthew and Sam Good looked in to enquire what was going on.

Matthew laughed heartily at what he called his sisters' masquerade dresses, and then entered into fluent conversation with Lewis Pennington, who

pleased him exceedingly. Sam was meanwhile employed in asking Huntley a thousand absurd questions, and paying Rosina foolish compliments. At length the young men set out on their walk, and Lewis was with some difficulty persuaded by Matthew to accompany them.

The painting scheme completely interrupted the usual routine of feminine occupation. Mr. Russell and the Goods were eager to look on and give their opinion, so that, for the first week, Mrs. Wellford's garden was a perpetual rendezvous, and Huntley found his progress greatly impeded by the admiration, criticism, and small talk of the by-standers. The charm of variety, however, he knew would soon cease, and then he should be left in comparative quiet. Till that coveted period arrived, he postponed the luxury of painting Hannah's portrait, and occupied himself with his study of Rosina. This flattered her imagination, and awoke both the interest and jealousy of Lewis, who at first was angry with him for not doing justice to her prettiness, and then, for dwelling, as he fancied, enamoured on her features.

Lewis Pennington's character was not such as one sees every day. His disposition was ardently

affectionate, his imagination lively, and his mind tinctured with a spice of romance which, united to manners of boyish gaiety and sincerity, was rather apt to make the sedate and cautious give him less credit for strength of judgment and principle than he really deserved, while it remarkably endeared him to those by whom he was intimately known. To hint that he came to Summerfield *on purpose* to fall in love with Rosina Wellford, would ruin my hero irreparably in the opinion of his judges, although such a *result* might appear the natural and proper consequence of his visit. The motives which had actuated him, however, were thoroughly characteristic of himself.

Rosina's childish beauty had had as little effect as might have been expected on his boyish imagination; but in after years, his parents' partial reminiscences of her, and the snatches of her clever letters which Marianne occasionally read aloud for the Doctor's amusement, kept alive his remembrance of her, and excited some degree of curiosity to know whether this lively and secluded young beauty were all that his imagination pictured. Summerfield was thought of by Lewis as a little nest of loveliness, where the trees were

greener and the air sweeter than anywhere else; and he could not help considering himself the originator of the happiness which breathed throughout Rosina's letters, since he it was who had contrived the scheme of her elopement from Park Place, an achievement which, in spite of the disgrace it had entailed on himself, he always remembered with amazing satisfaction. He resolved that if he should ever make a tour through the western counties of England, he would take Summerfield in his way; and on quitting college, idleness soon gave a substantial form to the plan which had once or twice floated through his brain. He told his father he should like to unbend his mind and recruit his health by a little excursion through some of the neighbouring counties, and that he thought he might as well begin by spending a week or ten days with that honest fellow, Russell. Dr. Pennington looked at his blythe, arch countenance and elastic figure, and could see no ravages made either by sickness or over-study; however, he had no objection to the boy's having a little change, and was well convinced he could learn no harm of Mr. Russell. So, on a good

horse, and with a fifty pound note in his pocket, Lewis started for Summerfield.

Here he found himself so exceedingly comfortable, that he thought, for the present, the western counties might take care of themselves. Mr. Russell was a most hospitable host, with enough love of humour to relish all Lewis's pleasantries, and of indulgence to sympathize in much of his romance. Their breakfasts and dinners were discussed with the utmost harmony: for the rest of the day, Mr. Russell was quite as much at liberty as ever, to write in his study or visit his parishioners; for Lewis either rode about the country or lounged the sultry hours away at Mrs. Wellford's. Here he was always sure of smiles, and a little coquetry into the bargain.

Rosina could not be prevailed on to acknowledge the contents of the postscript which she had torn off Marianne Pennington's letter before she gave it to her mother and sister. That it contained some laughing innuendo concerning Lewis was rendered as probable from her confusion as from the enthusiasm and romance which made Marianne so closely resemble her brother. If Marianne,

however, had possessed as much judgment as kindness, she would have left the postscript unwritten; since Rosina, induced by it to fancy Lewis a lover from the outset, shrank from his advances with a feeling of consciousness which not even her inclination to coquetry could overcome. Her vanity made her undoubtful of the effect of her charms; her modesty made her shrink, even while she longed for admiration, from the language of love; and thus, there were as many pretty blushings, and starts, and retreats, and trepidations, as a mischievous bystander could desire for amusement. Lewis was puzzled, attracted, and deceived: he became interested in the pursuit, and little doubtful of success. Yet he was not without his vexations.

He was at first uncommonly charmed with the daily sittings under the walnut tree, which afforded such opportunity for pleasant idling, and looking to and fro between the picture and Rosina; but he soon began to discover that these regular proceedings were monotonous and tiresome, and preventive of pleasant tête-a-tête rambles through the green lanes; while, if he contented himself with escorting the ladies in their evening walk, and

took a ride in the interim, he thereby left the field occupied by a rival whose genius sadly balanced against his own good looks. This conviction, when it first broke upon him, was mortifying. That Huntley, his inferior in station, fortune, and education, perhaps also in character, three inches shorter, and a mere painter to boot, should actually be his rival! Lewis's contempt for him seemed in a fair way of changing into dislike. He was pacified, however, by thinking that the picture would soon be finished, and the artist recalled by his business to London. Vain thought! Huntley, with the whole summer before him, and a picture in hand to which he was resolved to give the nicest finish, was in no hurry to depart; and as living at an inn was too expensive, he engaged a lodging at a little cottage in the valley, where he might remain all the autumn if he were so minded.

Thus settled at his ease, he pursued his occupation in the most leisurely manner imaginable, touching and retouching Orpah's face and figure till they possessed the finish of a miniature; apparently, as it seemed to Lewis, for the purpose of tiring him out, and remaining victor by his mere tenacity of the ground. As Lewis had no tolerable

pretence for remaining at Summerfield longer than a fortnight or three weeks, this plan seemed beyond the patience of mortal to bear; and he devoutly wished he could find some London acquaintance who had a pretence for taking out a writ of *habeas corpus* against the indefatigable artist.

If Lewis were thus alternately lapped in Elysium by Rosina's blushes, and chafed by her preference of his rival, Huntley was happier than he had ever been in his life, though not from the cause which Mr. Pennington suspected. He was engaged on a picture which pleased him; he was daily in the enjoyment of refined and pleasant society; he was shone on by the smiles of beauty, and had hourly opportunities of improving his acquaintance with the charms of Hannah's mind, while the delight of finishing her portrait was yet in store. He was now on speaking terms with every one in Summerfield: the Wellfords pleased him most; but he also liked Mr. Russell, Lewis Pennington, and Mr. and Mrs. Good; while partiality threw a halo round the other inhabitants of the village who had less to recommend them.

On the first Sunday which Lewis spent at Summerfield, Huntley strolled, after morning service,

along the banks of the little river which wound through the valley. It was a hot day in August; and the willows and ashes which hung over the stream, formed a pleasant shade. Huntley fell into reverie, and the subject of his thoughts was Hannah. He felt that he loved her from the bottom of his heart, and that the beauty which had at first attracted him, was enhanced by the loveliness of feminine virtues which no splendour of intellect or fashion could excel. While he dwelt on the gradually unfolded charms of her character, with unalloyed pleasure, the doubt occurred to him that possibly all his own endeavours to excite attachment might be ineffectual. Huntley was not without the pride of intellect, but he was not vain. He gave his personal recommendations no undue preponderance in the scale; and felt that Hannah must be conquered by the power of mind. While pursuing the same chain of thought, and debating whether he could really afford to marry, he threw himself on the ground, beneath the shade of a little clump of trees. Scarcely was he seated, when his ears were saluted by a tapping sound, not unlike that of a woodpecker; soon after, some one coughed, and then sneezed; and looking round,

Huntley perceived Sam Good seated at a little distance, cracking nuts,

"How d'ye do, Mr. Huntley?" said Sam, with the ease of an old acquaintance, edging himself nearer as he spoke: "I saw you in church this morning."

"Did you," said Huntley, *not* interrogatively.

"Yes; this is a fine day, is n't it?"

"Very," replied Huntley.

"But very hot. How hot it was in church to be sure! You and I have picked out a nice cool place."

"I am hardly satisfied with it," said Huntley, "I think I shall soon be moving."

"You won't better yourself if you do. How goes on your picture? Ah, Mr. Huntley! you have a lovely subject."

"Yes, I think I have," said Huntley, growing more interested in the dialogue.

"Sweet!" said Sam, cracking a nut. "Will you have some filberts? They're hardly ripe, though. Oh, I envy you, I assure you. She's a pretty little thing, Rosina."

"Oh," said Huntley with mortification, "I thought you were speaking of Miss Wellford."

" Hannah? no. Rosina for my money. Such a peachy kind of complexion, such a dimple, and such eyes.

" Yes," said Huntley, " Miss Rosina Wellford is exceedingly pretty, but her sister is by far the more beautiful girl."

" Rather an old girl, I think," said Sam.

" Old!" cried Huntley, looking as if he could have knocked him down.

" Yes, old," repeated the pert little articled clerk, " she looked as womanly as she does now when I was leaving school, and was a tall girl paying visits with her mother when I used to run about in pinafores. I'm sure she can't be far from three and twenty; and that, for a girl, I call old."

Sam, finding he had all the conversation to himself, soon afterwards walked off; and Huntley remained throwing stones into the water; and pondering on a young girl growing up in beauty without its being seen and admired by any one—without even dreaming, herself, of her own exceeding fairness. There was something which interested his fancy in the speculation. He wondered at Sam's audacity in calling Hannah by her

Christian name. It was a privilege he had envied Mr. Russell; but then, Mr. Russell had known her from a child, and was almost old enough to be her father; at any rate, her uncle. Sam Good's impertinence was unbearable!

CHAPTER XIV.

SUSPICIOUS APPEARANCES.

"WELL, how go on affairs in general, Rosy?" said Matthew, one afternoon as he opened the garden gate.

"Affairs in general," repeated she, laughing, "that is just like Sam Good. Come and see."

She led him towards Mr. Huntley's picture.

"Oh capital! Upon my word, Mr. Huntley is quite a—a what shall I say? A second Apelles. Only, don't fancy, Rosy, that you are half so handsome as your picture."

"To be sure I shall not," said she, removing his saucy fingers from her chin. "But I wish you would leave off calling me Rosy. Lewis Pennington does it, and I don't like it at all."

"By the by, where *is* Lewis? I thought I should find him here."

"He is riding somewhere, I suppose—I cannot presume to say where."

"Can't you? I should have thought *you* would have known at any rate. What a fine, spirited, open-hearted fellow he is!"

"So I think, Matthew," said his mother; "I am glad you seem to like each other."

"I am glad you think he likes *me*," said Matthew.

"Dear! why should he not?" cried Rosina, "Lewis Pennington need not be fastidious."

"No man had *better* be fastidious, but if any one has a right to be so, surely Lewis has."

"I do not know why. He is not particularly clever."

"Not deficient, either, Rosina, and particularly pleasing, at any rate."

"He never says any thing very brilliant."

"Oh, as to that, how few people do! The most agreeable companions are not those who are always striving to shine. Indeed, the very effort has something disagreeable in it."

"Ah, Matthew, but clever people can be brilliant *without* effort."

"How long is Lewis going to stay there?" said Matthew, taking hold of one of Rosina's ringlets.

"How should I know? How should we know?" said she quickly.

Matthew examined the picture for a few minutes, and then suddenly exclaimed, "I can tell you a piece of news if you like to hear it."

"What is it?" inquired Hannah.

"Guess," returned he.

"What a tiresome way that is of answering!" cried Rosina; "just like Mr. Russell."

"Why, Rosy," said Matthew goodhumouredly, "first you accuse me of imitating Sam Good, next, Lewis Pennington, and next, Mr. Russell. To hear you talk, one would think I picked up all the cast off bad habits of the parish. Have I learnt any thing of Mr. Huntley? Hey?"

She blushed, and said, "Well, whom does your news relate to?"

"None of the present company," said Matthew.

"Sam Good?"

"No."

"The Miss Hinckleys of Hundleford, then. I suppose one of them is going to be married."

"You girls must always be thinking of weddings," said Matthew. "Oh, you are quite out. It is nothing so serious as matrimony. Mrs. Shivers has returned to the Pleasance!"

"Is that all?"

"All! You would have thought a great deal of it a month ago; but lately, these paintings and visitings have made you so dissipated that you can't be surprised at any thing only a little out of the common. Yes, she has come back from the continent at last; and Mr. Good was sent for, this morning, to attend the housekeeper; but as it is *only* the housekeeper, I dare say I shall go to the Pleasance to-morrow. Don't you envy me?"

"Envy you? No; why should I?"

"You have often said you should like to see the house and grounds."

"Oh!—yes; but not in that kind of way."

"*That* kind of way! Let me tell you, Miss Rosy, there is nothing disreputable in *that* kind of way, as you call it. A medical man is on equal terms with his patients—"

"But your patient is only a housekeeper."

"But Mr. Good saw Mrs. Shivers herself, and lunched with her into the bargain. Don't be high

and mighty, Rosy,—Rosina, I mean! You had not these fine airs till lately. And what right have *we* to fine airs, any of us?"

"Excellent, Matthew," said his mother with a smile.

Circumstances seemed to conspire unfortunately against the success of Lewis's wooing. Rosina's fancy, and as she believed, her heart, were completely pre-occupied by his rival: she made frequent comparisons between them, and Huntley's genius and accomplishments always bore the palm. Even the *bonhommie* and guilelessness of heart which formed the greatest charm of Lewis's character, were against him under present circumstances, since they were completely opposed to the austere grace and mysterious dignity which she considered could alone atone in a hero for the absence of the fire of genius. His wit only amounted to pleasantry, and he rarely affected sentiment, even for her sake. To amuse and be amused seemed with him a greater object than to shine: his partiality for her was too openly and boyishly expressed; and to sum up his delinquencies, he had now and then, when tempted by a little extra kindness, ventured to call her Rosy!

How was it possible to endure such an ignominious abbrevation, even from a second-cousin? or to believe that the person who voluntarily so addressed his mistress, could have a spark of chivalrous or impassioned feeling in his composition? Instead of exalting her into a goddess, it was dragging her down to the level of a milkmaid! Rosina was even perverse enough to be secretly angry that Lewis should be better looking than Mr. Huntley, and she would never allow the fact to her mother and sister, saying that they might seek in vain for Huntley's genius in Lewis's eyes. Indeed her conversation had generally so much direct or indirect reference to Huntley, that this very circumstance might have taught her that hers was not the sweet silent passion of the heart, but merely a feverish dream of the imagination. Hannah was well persuaded of it, and was even convinced that Huntley's admiration of her sister had little depth, though she was unaware of the stronger feeling which she had herself excited. Mrs. Wellford and the young painter were almost the only persons who had not penetrated or guessed what Rosina fancied the secret of her heart. From the latter she had skill and delicacy enough to

enable her successfully to conceal it; and of her mother she was sufficiently afraid to beware of laying herself open to raillery and reproof. Mr. Russell was much more aware of all that was going on than she suspected; and Lewis, whose vision was sharpened by jealousy, saw a good deal both of what did and what did not exist. In the first place, he was puzzled to decide whether Rosina's conduct sprang from coquetry, from unconsciousness of his attachment, or from actual preference of his rival; but the conduct of that rival appeared much less doubtful. The intensity of expression in Huntley's eyes when he looked at Hannah, and the softness of his voice in addressing her, convinced Lewis that much more was here than simple politeness, and he believed that Huntley was playing a double part towards the sisters. Of this, Huntley was indeed guiltless; but appearances were against him, and as it was impossible he should marry both, Lewis believed he was only trifling with either, and boiled with indignation at the thought. His suspicions were also awakened in another quarter. When we have looked long on a bright object, every thing else seems, to our dazzled eyes, to wear the same hue. Lewis

began by considering what an excellent match might be made between his two favourites, Mr. Russell and Hannah, and arguing on rather unsubstantial premises, he at length persuaded himself that the gentleman, at least, was not indifferent; and in fact, deeply though secretly in love. Lewis could find no more work for the blind god in Summerfield: to think of Matthew and Phœbe Holland was too ridiculous.

CHAPTER XV.

CIVIL IMPERTINENCES.

Mrs. Good gave a tea party. The Greenways and Mrs. Wellford were invited to make up a whist table for Lady Worral; and the young Wellfords, the Miss Hollands, Mr. Russell, Mr. Huntley, and Lewis Pennington were free to amuse themselves as they pleased with music or conversation. Huntley was cut off from Hannah, by Mrs. Good, Miss Holland, and Mr. Russell, who formed a sociable little knot at one of the open windows; therefore, *au dernier ressort*, he played the agreeable to Rosina.

"Did you ever try the 'Sortes Virgilianæ?'" said he. "Suppose we try our fortune."

He opened a book at hazard. The first sentence that met his eye was "A woman, who from a sloven, becomes neat, or from being neat, becomes a sloven, is assuredly in love."

"Aha, ladies! who does that apply to?" said Matthew, looking round.

"Not to me, I am sure," said Rosina, meeting his eye securely, "I never was a sloven."

"Oh! nor I," cried Miss Phœbe Holland, "I would not be a sloven for all the world."

"Well, we will try again," said Huntley, taking up another book—"perhaps the next random shot may hit some of us more closely. The next shall be for me:—

'Ah me, they little know
Under what torments inwardly I groan!'"

Huntley raised his eyes, hoping to meet those of Hannah, but unfortunately they encountered Rosina.

"Try for me," said Lewis impatiently.

Huntley re-opened the Milton, and read:—

"My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More inexpert I boast not."

"I hope that does not hit," said Huntley laughing.

Not very far from the mark, however, thought Lewis.

"I will dip again for you," continued Huntley. "This time it shall be into Shakspeare:—'There are none of my uncle's marks upon you; he taught me how to know a man in love, in which cage of rushes, I am sure you are not prisoner—his marks were, a lean cheek, which you have not; a blue eye and sunken, which you have not; and a beard neglected, which you have not.'"

Rosina smiled ironically. "And here is another for somebody," cried Matthew, reading over Huntley's shoulder—"'By my troth, I was seeking for a fool when I found *you*.'"

"Thank you," said Huntley goodhumouredly.

"Gently, Matthew," said Lewis Pennington, "remember it is playing with edged tools."

"Yes, but the joke is," returned Matthew, "that nobody must complain if they cut their fingers."

"Dear! I think it is very entertaining," said Miss Phœbe. "Do let me try." She took up a book and read, with amusing emphasis,

"Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke."

"Who *is* our duke?" inquired she, looking

round with an air of perplexity. Nobody could tell her; and Matthew began to laugh.

"That is a very stupid one," said Phœbe, with disappointment. She made two or three other attempts, but they were equally unfortunate.

"Well, I cannot think how you do it," said she laying down the book.

"All chance, ma'am," said Huntley.

"I think," said little Fanny Good, who had been a silent but not unobserving bystander, "that Mr. Huntley does not always read *quite* the first words he sees, but that he looks down the page, and that if he sees any thing like anybody, he——"

"Oh, hush, Fanny, hush," said Matthew, laughing heartily and drawing her away.

"Oh, do let me go, Matthew," said she, struggling, "and I won't say any thing again."

"What do you think of *this*, Rosina?" said Lewis, in a low voice, pointing to a line in one of Madame de Genlis's works, which he was not malicious enough to read aloud—

"Une coquette se fait un jeu cruel d'inspirer des sentimens qu'elle est décidée á ne partager jamais."

"Well!" said Rosina, hardily, though she

coloured at the application. Lewis looked at her and seeing nothing to hope for in her countenance, sighed and turned away. "Pray dip for me, Mr. Huntley!" cried she with assumed eagerness. "you promised you would dip for me, and you have not done so yet."

"Dip! ay, dive, if you will," replied he, "into the depths of the ocean!"

"That would be rather too cruel of me to exact."

"And do not you love cruelty?" said he expressively. Rosina little thought that he was alluding to Lewis.

"Come, here is something about Rosaline. That may stand for Rosina, may not it?

> 'Who sees the heavenly Rosaline
> That, like a rude and savage man of Inde,
> At the first opening of the gorgeous east,
> Bows not his vassal head, and stricken blind
> Kisses the base ground with obedient breast?'"

Rosina laughed. "Oh, pray dip for *me*, Mr. Huntley!" cried Miss Phœbe.

"Certainly," he replied, again opening Milton.

> "'But who is this, what thing of sea or land,
> That——'

Oh, this won't do at all," cried he.

" Yes, yes, pray go on!" implored Miss Phœbe. Huntley resumed —

> " Who is this,
> That so bedecked, ornate, and gay,
> Comes this way sailing, like a steady ship
> With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
> Sails filled and streamers waving?"

" Dear! I'm sure I am not like a ship," said Phœbe, glancing at her canary lutestring.

" No, not the least in the world! I told you it was quite mal-à-propos," said Huntley, turning from her, and exchanging an arch look with Rosina.

" What game have you there, ladies and gentlemen, which seems to entertain you so much?" said Mrs. Good.

" Sortes Virgilianæ, they call it," said Miss Phœbe, approachiug her with a rather dissatisfied air. " It is very entertaining, a little of it, but one gets tired of it in time."

" Will you favour us with a little music then?" said Mrs. Good, rising to open the piano. Matthew hastened to save her the trouble, and having

launched Miss Phœbe into a solo, returned to Lewis.

"I agree with Miss Phœbe," said Lewis in a low voice, glancing at the same time towards Rosina and Huntley, who were deep in flirtation, "that one may push Sortes Virgilianæ a little too far. Mr. Huntley has, under their protection, insulted or flattered almost every one of the party."

"And did not *you* take advantage of them to push Rosy rather hard?" inquired Matthew. "I saw her blush pretty deeply."

The little party at the window being now broken up, Hannah and Mr. Russell approached the table.

"So you have been playing at Sortes Virgilianæ," said Mr. Russell. "Had you any clever hits?"

"Some rather hard hits," said Matthew; "they that play at bowls,—you know the rest."

Mr. Russell looked up from the book he had casually opened, struck by some rather daring speech of Huntley's. He glanced across the table; saw Rosina, brilliant in beauty and reckless spirits; Huntley, whose back was towards him, rattling

on with great animation and obvious encouragement; and Lewis biting his lip as he silently turned over a portfolio of prints. He looked down again on his book, but it was absently, and he caught most of the conversation. Miss Phœbe coming to the end of her '*air variée*,' Huntley's and Rosina's voices were *sans* accompaniment, and the flirtation paused in mid career. Mrs. Good now asked Rosina to play. She required rather more pressing than usual, but at length placed herself at the piano. She began one of Lewis's favourite songs. Mr. Russell could not help being amused by Lewis's movements. First, he started at hearing the well-known symphony, but continued turning over the prints—then he paused with his eyes immoveably fixed on the engraving before him, but evidently not thinking of it; then he hastily looked round, but encountering a side view of Huntley resumed his original position; still however, intently listening: at length, when the second verse commenced, with a line of which he particularly admired the sentiment, Lewis arose, pushed away the prints, and in another moment, was leaning over the piano.

"'Sweet Helen' has conquered!" thought Mr.

Russell; and he turned to see if Hannah had been observing the little scene; but she was speaking to Fanny Good. Fanny was called away, and Mr. Russell approached Hannah with a book in his hand.

"I have been trying," said he, "*my* luck at the Sortes, but I have not opened yet, on a single applicable passage. Let me make one more attempt, and if that is unsuccessful, I shall give it up in despair."

He opened at hazard, and began to read. A smile stole over his countenance. "This is pretty, is not it?" said he; and sitting down by Hannah, he read in an under tone the following passage.

"'Happiness is the natural design of all the world; and every thing we see done is in order to attain it. My imagination places it in friendship. By friendship, I mean an entire communication of thoughts, wishes, interests, and pleasures, being undivided: a mutual esteem, which naturally carries with it a pleasing sweetness of conversation, and terminates in the desire of making one another happy, without being forced to run into visits, noise, and hurry, which serve rather to trouble than compose the thoughts of any reasonable crea-

ture. I take you to have sense enough not to think this romantic.'"

"What do you think of it?" said he.

"I think that it *is* romantic," said Hannah, smiling, "but very beautiful, and not impossible."

"Do you think it not impossible, merely from judging of your own mind, or from any example you have observed in the conduct of others?"

Hannah considered, and replied, "From both. My own feelings make me believe that I could be happy in the cultivation of such a friendship; and I also think that a friendship such as you have described *does* exist, between my mother and myself."

Mr. Russell's dark eyes said very flattering things at that moment, if Hannah could but have translated their meaning.

"But, Hannah," said he, "the friendship spoken of in this book is supposed to exist between persons of different sexes."

"In that case," said Hannah, slightly blushing, "would not the feeling be called love?"

Matthew here interrupted them by offering a plate of sandwiches. There had been a little stir

going on in the room for some time, on account of the arrival of Lady Worral's carriage, and the supper having consequently to be hurried. Her ladyship never gave suppers, and was angry with those who did; she therefore cast an evil eye on the cakes, jellies, and blanc-manges which Mrs. Good's hospitality had provided, and which the servants in their haste had set in wrong places, declaring she would not touch one of them, yet nevertheless tasting every thing Mr. Good put upon her plate. She was duly cloaked, handed out, and bowed away; and then Mr. Good, declaring he had no notion of letting the old lady break up the party, went his rounds with the various good things, which he pressed every one to taste. The young men followed his example, and Lewis and Huntley, each bringing Rosina some trifle, nearly broke a plate between them in trying which should be first.

"*I* was the commissioned," said Huntley, laughing.

"And I had the merit of guessing the lady's wishes before they were named," said Lewis.

"How silly to dispute about a trifle!" cried

Rosina. "Lewis came first, therefore I *command* you, Mr. Huntley, to eat what you have brought, yourself."

"Oh, that all ladies' commands could be as pleasantly obeyed!" he exclaimed.

"That is a double entendre," said Matthew; "do you mean that the peculiarity of the pleasure exists in obeying the lady, or eating the trifle?"

"What a question for a gentleman to answer!" returned Huntley.

"'Gentleman!'" said Lewis to himself. "He is but a painter. Perhaps if he *were* a gentleman, I might make him either answer *it* or answer *for* it."

"Lewis, will you be so kind as to give me a glass of water?" said Hannah, who saw that something had vexed him.

"With pleasure," said he, starting at the sound of her gentle voice—"will you not let me put a little wine in it?"

"None, I thank you."

"If you were any one but Miss Hannah Wellford," returned he, smiling, "I should accuse you of having covertly reprimanded my negligence in not having asked you to take wine with me."

"But, as I *am* Miss Hannah Wellford," replied she, "you will, I hope, give me credit for not meaning to affront, even when appearances are against me—and perhaps" (in rather a lower tone,) "you will extend your credit to others also."

"I wish all others were as single-hearted," said he, quitting her to fulfil her request.

At the same moment, Rosina said, "Here, Mr. Huntley; as Mr. Pennington brought me the plate, I shall insist on your replacing it on the table."

"How evenly you hold the balances between your slaves!"

"What is that about slaves?" cried Mr. Russell. "Are you discussing the slave trade, Mr. Huntley? There is a curious paragraph on it in this paper."

Huntley, caught in the trap, was forced to glance over the paragraph; and before he laid down the newspaper, he perceived some intelligence which made him forget Rosina, and enter into conversation with Mr. Good and Mr. Russell. The party now broke up, and Huntley's lodgings lying in the same way as Mrs. Wellford's cottage, he accompanied them to the gate, walking at the

side of Mrs. Wellford, while the girls, arm in arm, followed closely behind.

Lewis lighted his bed candle the moment he entered the vicarage parlour. "Good night, Mr. Russell," said he

"Good night, Lewis. I hope you have had a pleasant evening."

"Very!" replied Lewis with strong emphasis. "Milton might well call woman a 'cleaving mischief!'"

"Come, come, Lewis," said Mr. Russell, "don't go to your pillow in wrath. The fault was not all the lady's."

"Huntley led her on, you mean! Consummate puppy! If——"

"No *ifs*, Lewis, just yet," interrupted his friend playfully—"I did not mean Huntley: I was thinking of yourself."

"I! what have I done ——"

"I will tell you. You have by your attention and flattery turned the head of a very lively, inexperienced young girl, already too prone to vanity. Her heart has had no time to imbibe any depth of feeling; she is proud of her power over you, and ——"

"Huntley has it all to answer for; not I," said Lewis—"but why should I be surprised? All women are more or less coquettes."

"Now, you are falling into the vulgar error, my honest friend, and prefer laying the fault of an individual on the whole sex, to confessing that individual to be less perfect than many others. Nay, you are doing Rosina injustice in calling her a coquette, though I own, her conduct to-night deserved the epithet of coquetry. But many circumstances, and your ill-concealed vexation among the rest, conspired to make her act recklessly and foolishly. Perhaps even by this time, she may be sorry for her levity. Endeavour to judge of her less like a lover, and more like a reasonable being, if possible; and neither exact super-feminine perfection, nor degrade your goddess into a flirt—the most contemptible character to be found among the sex."

Lewis sighed, and repeated his good-night.

CHAPTER XVI.

A DAY OF PLEASURE.

THE following day was Sunday. Lewis, the son of a rector and the guest of a vicar, had no intention of awaking feelings at variance with the duties of the day, by calling at the White Cottage; and, far from cherishing sentiments of enmity towards Rosina, he felt more kindly as he knelt by her side and repeated the same prayers.

Who can be angry on a Sabbath? Not those who after a week of trouble and toil, wake to a consciousness that the ringing of the anvil has ceased, that the flail lies silent on the threshing-floor, that the husbandman and the manufacturer taste of the strange thing, leisure, and that the bell is summoning rich and poor to learn the same duties and crave the same blessings in the temple of God. Not those who feel that whatever bad passions they foster six days in the week, pride

should be reined in and contention hushed while the air around them is yet musical with admonitions to love and peace, and with the mingled orisons of assembled multitudes. Not those who, if they ever pause and think, in the midst of dissipation's feverish career, it is on that day when the laws of this country cause places of public amusement to be closed and commerce to stand still, that the small voice of conscience and the gayer cry of nature may for a few short hours be heard.

Afternoon service was just beginning, when the unusual sound of carriage wheels was heard without; and shortly after, a very pretty woman in a very pretty bonnet, entered the church and advanced towards the vicar's ample pew. This, as Mr. Russell had no occasion for its use, had continued to be occupied by the Wellfords, who now with silent smiles made room for the unexpected visitant. This lady was Mrs. Shivers of the Pleasance. Her country seat stood in the adjoining parish, but she was in the habit of coming once or twice in the course of the summer, to hear Mr. Russell's afternoon sermon. Only a sort of bowing acquaintance had hitherto existed between

her and the Wellfords: on the present occasion, however, Mrs. Shivers was disposed to be very friendly and gracious. During the two years she had spent on the continent, Matthew and Rosina had grown from mere boy and girl, into very prepossessing looking young people; and she had heard enough of Mrs. Wellford and Hannah from Mr. Russell to make her resolve to improve their acquaintance on the first opportunity. No sooner, therefore, had the service ended than she shook hands all round, mistaking Lewis for Matthew, and Matthew for his younger brother Harry: (no wonder she was surprised at his growth!) and the mistake was not thoroughly explained till they reached the churchyard. *Then*, she laughed at her own blindness, wondered she should have fancied a likeness where there was no relationship, was corrected in that particular, and finally invited the whole family to spend a long day at the Pleasance. Mrs. Wellford excused herself on plea of the distance, but Mrs. Shivers, increasing in earnestness in proportion to the difficulties started, would take no refusal, and offered to send her poney-carriage for them on the following day, if they had no other engagement. She smiled so winningly that it was

impossible to refuse: Mr. Russell and Lewis were included in the invitation, and the lady drove off, after making captive at least half a dozen hearts.

"Charming woman!" exclaimed Rosina warmly, as they walked home. "How completely her manners are removed from hauteur and affectation, while it is impossible not to feel that they are those of high breeding!"

"The best of it is," said Mrs. Wellford, "that it is not mere manner which fascinates us in Mrs. Shivers, but real kindness of heart. Mr. Russell tells me he knows of no one possessed of more genuine excellence of disposition. It is true she is fond of the gaieties of a London spring; and, formed as she is to give and receive pleasure in society, who can wonder at it? Enough of the summer, autumn, and winter still remains for her to have much leisure for self-improvement, and for doing a great deal of good among her poorer neighbours."

"Exactly the sort of woman I should like to be, and the sort of life I should like to lead!" said Rosina. "With such good looks, such resources, and such a fortune, a woman of her age may be quite as happy, I should think, as in the bloom of youth."

"Who can doubt it?" said Hannah.

"No one so sage as you are, of course," returned Rosina, laughing; "but I, for one, have always wished '*le printemps de la vie*' could be perpetual."

"A very foolish wish, my dear," observed Mrs. Wellford. "Happiness depends on the moderation and gratification of our desires, not on the number of years we have told."

"But suppose, mamma, those desires should be for a continuance of youth, beauty, and admiration?"

"Then, Rosina, I should say the person that had formed them was very weak; and as much an object of contempt as pity."

"Very likely; but still that does not prove that the 'dark brown years' are naturally as happy as those of youth."

"You just now said," interposed Hannah, "that you thought a woman of Mrs. Shivers's age might be quite as happy as in the spring of life."

"Ay, but how few Mrs. Shiverses there are! and even she in another ten or fifteen years will no longer be enviable. If her sight fails, what will be-

come of her reading? if she grows deaf, what pleasure can she take in society? or, if rheumatic, what will become of her charming rides in her poney phaeton?"

"Even with all these calamities attendant on old age," said Hannah, "she may yet be happy. There is a passage which struck me last night—"

"What! at Mrs. Good's?"

"Yes, in one of the books which had been used for the Sortes Vigilianæ. It was in one of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's letters, concerning the comforts peculiar to old age. I cannot repeat it to you word for word, but I will shew it to you when we reach home."

Hannah remembered her promise, and looked out the passage. "You must consider," said she, "that Lady Mary was nearly seventy years of age when she wrote this letter, in a foreign country, removed from all her family, and almost wholly prevented by weak sight from reading: in her youth she had been a wit, beauty, and coquette; few therefore, could have had a better opportunity of comparing feverish exciting pleasures with those of monotonous tranquillity; yet what does she say? 'It was formerly a terrifying view to me that I

should one day be an old woman. I now find that nature has provided pleasures for every state. Those alone are unhappy who will not be contented with what she gives; but strive to break through her laws, by affecting a perpetuity of youth; which appears to me as little desirable at present as the dolls do to you, that were the delight of your infancy.' She was happy, you see; yet she had no very lively feelings of religion. She does not say that 'God has provided,' but that '*nature* has provided pleasures for every state.' If such content and satisfaction are the result of mere philosophy, what would be the increased happiness of a woman of religion, one who could look back, not on a youth of frivolity and vanity, but of well sustained trial?"

"Very well argued indeed!" said Rosina. "Certainly, Hannah, you are cut out for a parson's wife. What an excellent helpmate you would be to darling Mr. Russell! You would not only make his puddings, but make his sermons."

Hannah did not lose her composure, nor even blush at this sarcasm. "I have no ambition to fill the post you have assigned me," said she, "nor do I think my interference would be wanted

either in Mary White's puddings or Mr. Russell's sermons."

"Perhaps not," returned Rosina, "but remember, after all, Hannah, the old age you have been describing is that of a wife or widow; not even you can soften the dismal fate of an old maid."

"Nay," said Hannah, "try the passage I have been reading in another way. 'It was formerly a terrifying view to me that I should one day be an *old maid*. I now find that nature has provided pleasures for every state—' It reads quite as well."

"Ay, but it has never been written; it is no result of experience," said Rosina. "Oh, my dear! the old age of a single woman must be very forlorn."

"Why so?" said Hannah. "Unless she has outlived all her friends, which, I grant, must be melancholy enough in any state, she has the connexions of her youth who have grown old with her, the same useful and innocent pursuits, and the same religious consolations."

"Ah, but my dear Hannah, the ridicule!—"

"For what? Do women always marry sensible men?"

"Oh, certainly not."

"What honour is there, then, in the addresses of a fool? Surely the woman who accepts a weak, worthless man, merely to avoid the name of an old maid, is more ridiculous than one to whom only the negative stigma attaches, of never having had an offer. Is *that* the indispensable requisite? Ladies would do well, then, to pin a list of their conquered knights on their sleeve. But I did not know that the diamond of which dozens of idlers have inquired the price, was more valuable than those shut up in the jeweller's drawer, or sleeping in their mine."

"My dear Hannah," exclaimed Rosina with sudden energy, "I am certain that if you should have the misfortune to be an old maid, you will be the best that ever lived!"

Hannah smiled, but sat down to read without replying.

The following morning was as fine as Hannah had hoped and Rosina anticipated. In preparing to visit so stylish a lady as Mrs. Shivers, even Hannah was obliged to devote twice as much time as usual to the cares of the toilette. Mr. Huntley was consequently disappointed of his sitters, for

Rosina could scarcely spare time to run down stairs to make their excuses. "Poor Mr. Huntley!" cried she as she was returning to the bedroom where Hannah was unfolding muslins and ribbons, "he looked so disappointed! What a thousand pities he is not going to the Pleasance!"

"Nay, it will be too ridiculous of you, Rosina," said Hannah, "if you spoil your day's pleasure by regretting the absence of a person you see at least once in every twenty-four hours."

"Who would have thought of the philosophic Hannah's quoting ridicule as an evil to be avoided?" said Rosina with some pique.

"You dread it so much sometimes," said Hannah, "that I thought I could urge nothing more likely to frighten you into common sense."

"And do you really think, my dear Hannah, I am so very deficient in common sense?"

"I think you now and then discover *uncommon* sense," said Hannah playfully.

"Hark! there is Matthew calling to us beneath the window," said Rosina, running to the casement.

"Will some of you come down?" cried he.

"We cannot, Matthew, we are dressing. Wait a little while."

"I cannot wait," he replied, "I have run down the lane to tell you I shall not be able to go with you to Mrs. Shivers's. Old Kippis has sent over, express, for Mr. Good, so I can't be spared."

"Oh, Matthew! What a disappointment."

"Yes, it *is* a disappointment; however, I am going in the first place to Hundleford. *That*, you know, will make some amends," added he, laughing. "Where is Hannah? I know *she* can't have her hair in curl papers. Oh, there you are, Hannah. Good by; give my love to my mother. Rosina looks quite like a Juliet; it is a pity Lewis is not here to play Romeo. I am glad you have such a cool day."

Matthew kissed his hand and ran off.

Exact to the time appointed, Mrs. Shivers's carriage arrived, and, to the ladies' praise be it spoken, it was not kept waiting. The five miles' drive was extremely pretty; and Rosina was enchanted with the scenery, the weather, and the easy motion of the phaeton. A neat lodge gate admitted them into Mrs. Shivers's grounds, and

after passing through a winding plantation, they found themselves at the Pleasance.

The house was such a mixture of all styles, that it was difficult to say whether castle, cottage, or villa predominated. No one would ever have designed a *whole*, such as it now stood, and it was evident that each improver had run up his own portion of the edifice with more regard to his own peculiar taste than to what already displayed that of his predecessor: time had thrown its mellowing hue over all, and a variety of creeping plants connecting battlement, balcony, and balustrade, beautified what was seen, and hid what was incongruous.

In a small Gothic hall lighted with coloured glass, Mrs. Shivers was waiting to receive her guests, accompanied by a pleasing young lady whom she introduced as her niece, Miss Pakenham. After bonnets and shawls had been laid aside and preliminary subjects discussed, Mrs. Shivers proposed a walk through the conservatory, saying she thought it would be pleasanter to go over the grounds in the cool of the evening.

"Are you fond of flowers?" asked Miss Pa-

kenham of Rosina, as they proceeded towards the conservatory.

"Yes," said Rosina, "but Hannah is much the best botanist."

"Perhaps you are like me, and think it pleasanter to smell and look at flowers, than to learn their long names. I never could conquer the *andrias* and *folias* of the botanical dictionary. Unluckily, or perhaps luckily, in my superficial education, the learned languages were neglected; and I must say I infinitely prefer the poetical and simple names of our flowers to your unpronounceable Latin technicalities. There is a great deal of sentiment in many of them. What can be prettier, for instance, than daisy, 'daye's eye, which men call the eye of the daye'? Or heart's ease, which in France, they call 'pensée'? Again, does the ugly word *Myosotis* convey any sentimental ideas? But 'forget-me-not' at once reminds us of the flowery epitaph of the slain at Waterloo, and the tale of the gallant knight who plunged into a lake to gather a tuft of flowers for his lady-love, and had only time to fling them on shore and exclaim 'forget me not' when he was whelmed in the watery deep."

"Where did you find that romantic story, Maria?" inquired Mrs. Shivers.

"I read it in a book, aunt, I assure you, though not in the Botanical Magazine."

"The lady must have been very passionately fond of flowers, if she did not think them too dearly purchased," said Mrs. Wellford.

"And the gentleman must have been a very modest self-estimator, to have set his life at the same value as a tuft of forget-me-not," added Mrs. Shivers.

"Oh, you ladies view the matter in too straightforward a light. How could he take a better method of proving how highly he valued her slightest wishes?"

"A method which we need not fear will become too common."

"No, indeed. Every spark of romance is now extinguished. I should like to tell the story to Charles!"

"He would say the man did not *mean* to drown."

"Or else question the authenticity of the story. That is the shortest way, when people meet with any thing which they cannot reconcile to their

own ways of thinking and acting. Oh, I will tell the story to Charles and Mr. Hope by and by, and hear what they say to it."

So, thought Rosina, other guests besides Mr. Russell and Lewis are expected.

"Do you visit the Hopes?" said Miss Pakenham, turning to Rosina.

"No."

"Ah, I thought the distance must be too great."

Too great indeed, thought Rosina, but there are distances of rank as well as of parishes.

"Charles can make only one objection to Mr. Hope," pursued Maria, "that he does not employ Stultz. He has offered to introduce them to each other the next time he is in town. Only think of an introduction being necessary to a tailor!"

"Strange indeed! Pray, who is Charles?"

"Oh, my brother. I forgot you did not know him by name. Charles is a great connoisseur in dress. He has written some valuable notes, I assure you, on the Neckclothiana. He says, if he ever publishes, it shall be a little work which he has long had by him and to which he is making continual additions on the subject of hats. He

wishes to create a standard of taste. Oh, you laugh, but the manuscript really exists, and is full of similies and quotations. Now do not let me prejudice you against Charles by these little anecdotes, for he is one of the best creatures in the world, only a little inclined to satire and dandyism."

Rosina and Miss Pakenham had made the tour of the conservatory long before Mrs. Wellford and Hannah had sufficiently examined half its contents. "Shall we wait or proceed to the picture gallery?" said Maria.

"Oh, the picture gallery by all means," replied Rosina.

"This way then. To tell you the truth, I am delighted to leave that suffocating atmosphere. What can be more intolerable than a conservatory at the beginning of September?"

Maria led the way to the picture gallery. It was neither very large nor very valuable; but to Rosina, who had not seen ten paintings in her life, it appeared magnificent. A dozen or twenty family portraits, some pretty landscapes and small pieces by modern artists, and several good copies from ancient masters completed the collection.

Rosina was delighted; and Miss Pakenham had almost equal pleasure in acquainting her with the subjects and the names of the artists, and in pointing out their merits and defects. Pictures afford abundant materials for conversation. They compared English, Italian, and Dutch scenery, recalled historical and mythological anecdotes to each others' memories, and determined in what respect dress had improved or declined since the days of Vandyke and Sir Peter Lely. When these points had been discussed, they turned to the long table which occupied the middle of the gallery, covered with portfolios and books of engravings. There was an easy gaiety in Miss Pakenham's manners which generally secured her pleasing and being pleased; and she and Rosina seemed drawn by instinct into speedy acquaintanceship. Maria quickly discovered that Rosina was better read and possessed of greater talent than herself; but she neither felt any shadow of jealousy on that account, nor contempt for her unacquaintance with many trifling things that had become household words in the temple of fashion. While Miss Pakenham was shewing her companion some of her own drawings, and

pointing out their glaring faults with perfect unconcern and good humour, they were joined by Mrs. Shivers, Mrs. Wellford, and Hannah. The hour before dinner was pleasantly spent; and before the gentlemen had arrived, Mrs. Shivers, to Rosina's delight, invited her to spend a few days at the Pleasance.

"Maria's eyes seem to thank me for the proposal," added she, smiling.

"I only fear you will turn my country girl's head, with your kindness," said Mrs. Wellford.

"No, no, ladies do not turn each other's heads—there is no fear. Let me see. How stand our engagements? The Forsters and Hamiltons are coming to us to-morrow, with a train of servants, so that I shall not have a bed unoccupied; but they will only remain a week, or ten days at the longest, in their way to the sea-side, after which, Maria and I shall be quite by ourselves; when I hope, my dear, Mrs. Wellford will spare you to us. I must not dare to run away with both her daughters—"

Rosina was smiling with embarrassed pleasure, when Mr. Charles Pakenham entered the gallery. He was neither handsome nor plain, but gentle-

manly in manner, and Rosina fancied he looked satirical. She would not have known that his dress was the height of fashion, had not his sister hinted at the fact; since not Pelham, the prince of coxcombs, could have been freer from every symptom of finery likely to attract vulgar admiration; and it was only the initiated who could duly appreciate the easy and graceful fit of his costume, the finished tie of his cravat, and the negligent disposition of his hair. All these niceties were lost on our village belles, who only saw that he was pale, had light eye-lashes, and rather highly arched eyebrows.

"What can make Mr. Russell so late, Charles?" said Mrs. Shivers.

"Really, ma'am, I cannot presume to say. Possibly he wishes to exculpate himself from the charge of stupidity, for one of our poets tells us that

'Dullness ever must be regular.'"

"I half expected Mr. Hope."

"Did you? I did not."

"Why not? You heard me ask him."

"Yes, ma'am, so I have often; but, as Milton

says, 'Hope never comes.' I suppose he is afraid of Maria's bright eyes."

"What nonsense, Charles."

"So *I* think, Maria. I've stood their lightning a good many years, have not I, without being hurt!"

"You know I did not mean that."

"What did you mean, then?"

"That you had assigned no good reason for Mr. Hope's not coming."

"*Good* reason? How do I know that he has any? Perhaps he does not wish to *lunch* three hours before his usual dinner time. Perhaps he does not patronize English cooks."

"I should hope," said Mrs. Shivers, "my cook was good enough for——"

"Hope? that's tautology. Do you patronize tautology, Miss Wellford?"

"I should hardly presume to *patronize* any thing," replied Hannah smiling.

"That is very wrong. Very wrong indeed. Perhaps you do not know that it has been the fashion to patronize every thing, this season. Instead of talking of liking and disliking, the phrase

is 'I patronize this'—'I don't patronize that.' It is thought amazingly witty. Have you been shewing off your drawings, Maria?"

He sat down to examine them, and affected to be struck with admiration. After turning over all which lay on the table, he seized on a portfolio.

"There is nothing in it worth seeing, I assure you, Charles," said Miss Pakenham.

"Allow me to satisfy myself on that point," he returned. "You do your drawings injustice, my dear; they display a great deal of originality. Here, Miss Wellford, you behold what at first you might suppose a mere collection of scratches; but on nearer examination, you will find it to consist of the various parts of Queen Mab's atomy phaeton. These diverging lines, you perceive, represent the waggon spokes made of long spiders' legs: this little piece of scribble is the cover of grasshoppers' wings; this acute angle is the cricket-bone whip, while the faint uncertain marks in this direction are a grand and original attempt to represent 'the moonshine's watery beams.'"

"How can you invent such nonsense, Charles? It is merely the scrap of paper on which I tried my pencils."

"Is it?" said he, with a look of naïveté.

"Here come Mr. Russell and Mr. Pennington at last," said Mrs. Shivers.

Lewis appeared with a countenance of entire serenity. He rejoiced in entering a society from which Mr. Huntley was excluded; and the smiling looks of Rosina, whom he had never seen dressed to so much advantage, completed his satisfaction. Rosina was struck, in her turn, with the perfect ease and good breeding which characterized his manner of addressing Mrs. Shivers and the Pakenhams. As soon as politeness admitted, he secured a chair beside her, and began to talk, merely for the sake of hearing her answer.

"So Matthew is not here."

"No; Mr. Good could not spare him. He was obliged to go to Hundleford."

"Matthew won't have much objection to that, will he? He likes going to Hundleford."

"Yes, but it was a disappointment nevertheless."

"What sort of people are the Hinckleys?"

"Oh, I only know them from seeing the young men and women ride about on horseback. They are very rich, and live in an old manor-house—"

"Something like a tea-caddy. I have seen it in my rides. I asked a countryman whose house it was, and he told me Mr. Hinckley's. There are two yew-trees in the garden, one representing a peacock, the other a dragon. Did you enjoy your ride here to-day?"

"Yes, very much. It was delightful."

Dinner was now announced, and Lewis offered her his arm. Every one else had been laughing at some witticism of Mr. Pakenham's, which Rosina wished Lewis had not prevented her hearing.

"You see I have made no strangers of you," said Mrs. Shivers, as the first course of an elegant but unostentatious dinner was uncovered.

"Is that an excuse or a boast, my dear aunt?" inquired Mr. Pakenham.

"Oh—perhaps a little of both. Why do you ask?"

"Because the former is quite out of fashion, and the latter might be made by the poorest person in the kingdom."

"You are a saucy fellow," said his aunt good-humouredly. "Pray, Mrs. Wellford, is Lady Worral ill, or absent from Okely Park? I missed her yesterday in her accustomed pew."

"Lady Worral has a severe cold," said Mrs. Wellford, "which she made worse by going home late from Mr. Good's on Saturday."

"I rather wonder at Mr. Good's tempting her to go out."

"His duties as an apothecary and a hospitable neighbour were in opposition," said Mr. Russell. "Mrs. Good's invitations were already issued, and Lady Worral did not like to be disappointed of her rubber. In such a case, you know, a medical man could only say 'I think you had better not come, though I shall be happy to see you.'"

"An odd time of year, this, to take cold," observed Mr. Pakenham.

"Oh, people may have colds any time of the year, in this changeable climate," said Maria.

"But the weather has not changed lately," returned Charles.

"I can tell you how Lady Worral caught her cold, since it excites so much speculation," said Rosina, laughing, "she has been very busy lately, superintending the painting and whitewashing of her house; insomuch that the workmen, being rather worried by her constant interference, pretended one day not to know she was underneath

the scaffolding, and upset a pail of water, which deluged her from head to foot."

"Ha, ha, ha! A capital shower bath!" cried Mr. Pakenham.

"But Rosina," said Mr. Russell,—"though the pail was certainly overset, how do you know that the men were worried, and that it was not an accident?"

"Oh, Lady Worral told me she was sure they had done it on purpose; and as to her worrying the men, I said she did so then, because she does so always."

"Surely that was fair," said Lewis, glancing at Mr. Russell.

"Poor woman!" said Mrs. Wellford, "she was very warm at the time, and, of course, unprepared for the shock. Then, she stood scolding the men instead of immediately changing her clothes, so that it was no wonder that for three or four days she should be seriously ill."

"And she might have been so to this day if it had not been for the nursing of some very kind young ladies," observed Lewis.

"The Miss Wellfords, of course," said Mr. Pakenham. "And pray, Miss Rosina, may I be so

bold as to enquire how you entertained the old lady? Probably you read to her works of pious instruction, and received from her lips those precepts of morality and propriety which experienced age is so well qualified to give."

"For shame, Charles!" said Miss Pakenham.

"No," said Rosina, smiling, "I used to read the newspapers to her, and sometimes play a game of cribbage: at other times, I took my work, and told her whatever I could think of to entertain her."

"Alias, a little innocent scandal, I presume," rejoined Mr. Pakenham. "Talking of scandal—there was an anecdote I heard the other day—quite true, I can pledge my word for it, though I won't name the parties. A certain dowager was in want of a companion—in common parlance, a *toady*. You know the species, don't you? One that hears everlasting stories with indefatigable patience, and keeps bowing and bowing in sign of attention, and nurses the sick lapdog, and arranges the sofa cushions, and writes confidential letters, and keeps accounts. Well, some one thought the situation would be highly eligible for the daughter of an insolvent banker—we won't

mention names—who was on the point of starvation; but doubted whether she would be qualified for it on account of her want of education. She described the girl as proficient in nothing but dancing and dress, and doubted even whether she understood simple subtraction. 'Oh! never mind that,' said the gentleman whom she was consulting on the subject, 'never mind her ignorance of subtraction; if she understands *detraction*, I dare say that will answer every purpose.'"

"Excellent," said Lewis.

"But not very politely brought in, I think," said Mrs. Shivers.

Charles put on one of his incomprehensible looks, which made every one laugh. Maria's mirth lasted the longest.

"I cannot imagine what all this laughing is about," said he coolly. "Mrs. Wellford, may I have the pleasure —?"

The ladies, anxious to avail themselves of the fineness of the evening, did not linger over their dessert, and the gentlemen were too gallant to keep them long in waiting. They re-united on the hall steps, and Mrs. Shivers led the way with Lewis.

"There's old Caius Marius, done in lead, you see," said Mr. Pakenham, pointing to a pedestalled figure with his cane. "Mighty cold the old fellow looks, among the quivering aspens, and as if he were a little ashamed of his Roman drapery, among our superfine cloths and French silks. There, again, stands Mercury, good as new, and quite handsome; but who the next effigy is intended to represent, whether a Grecian lamplighter, or Alexander, 'seizing a flambeau with zeal to destroy,' I protest myself unable to inform you."

"Silly Charles!" cried Maria, "do not you see that it is Hymen with his torch?"

"Is it? Nay then, he should have been placed next to Marry-us. Is that bad, Miss Wellford?"

"Miss Wellford, I beg you will not encourage him by laughing. Charles sets up for a fine gentleman, which he will never be as long as he makes bad puns. A punster is on a level with a pickpocket."

"Prove it, prove it, Maria!"

"Nay, I have Dr. Johnson's authority for saying so. I leave proofs for gentlemen; assertion is enough for ladies."

"Luckily for them, sweet creatures, who would often find it difficult to substantiate their assertions."

"But the assertion in the present case was a gentleman's," said Mr. Russell. "Can you favour us, Miss Pakenham, with Dr. Johnson's reasons for treating poor punsters with such severity?"

"No, Mr. Russell, I do not remember that any were stated."

"Nay, then, for the honour of our sex, we will find some for him."

"Not I," said Charles, "for I vow I think punning a very allowable recreation; and it is sufficient for the world to know it is patronized by myself and Shakspeare."

"*Ego et Rex meus!*" said Maria.

"Come and admire this pretty tablet," cried Lewis, a little in advance.

"It was a whim of Maria's," said Mrs. Shivers —"the motto is happy, is it not?"

"'Negli boschi, la vera
Vertù alberga; il cittadino stuolo
Sol la spoglia ha di quella, o il nome solo.'"

"Happy for countryfolks that choose to apply

it, with a smirk, to themselves," said Charles—"It rather cuts up us poor West-enders."

"What does it mean?" asked Rosina of Mr. Russell in a low voice.

"Let me see," said he, "I must rub up my Italian. It means, I believe,

> "'The shades are Virtue's home; her slough alone
> Is found in cities; sometimes but her name.'"

"Condensation condensed!" said Mrs. Shivers. "Metastasio uses so few superfluous epithets that he cannot often be compressed; but you have curtailed half a line."

"And half an idea," interrupted Mr. Pakenham. "Listen to my version, and judge which is most faithful.—

> "'Virtue lives in the woods, and deeply loathes
> The cits, who have her name and her old clothes.'"

"Exquisite poetry!" said Lewis. "How felicitous is the idea of cits walking to and fro in Virtue's cast off garments!"

"Sneer at Metastasio, not at me," said Mr. Pakenham. "Why, 'tis a sight you may see every day in London streets! Affectation in an old veil

of Modesty, Assurance in a cast off surtout of Frankness, Bravado flourishing a cane that had been dropped by Bravery, and so forth to the end of the chapter, 'all a sham,' as Clara Fisher says. Where are we going? To the water-side?—Suppose we have a little row. Do you patronize rowing, Mrs. Wellford?"

They had reached the river side, where a wherry was moored to a landing place.

"Are you afraid, Mrs. Wellford?" said Mrs. Shivers.

"Not in the least," she replied.

"Let me hand you in, then," said Lewis. "I see there are some nice sculls."

"Sculls," repeated Hannah.

"Yes, not dead men's bones, but little oars, or oar-ettes. Were you never in a boat before?"

"No," said Hannah, "the river, you know, is not navigable at Summerfield."

"Let me give you a word of advice, then. Do not mistake the boat for a drawing-room, for if you attempt to *promenade* in it, we shall infallibly be upset."

"Is there any danger?" said Rosina, drawing

back her foot. "The seat seems very near the water's edge."

"No, no; no danger in the world," said Mrs. Shivers. "I did mean to have had a railing made, but we so long habituated ourselves to use the boat without one, that we have no fear; and the water, you see, is so shallow, that the sand and pebbles can be perceived beneath."

Thus re-assured, Rosina ventured to enter, and as Charles and Lewis intended to row, Mr. Russell seated himself with the ladies. Rosina, finding how evenly the boat was trimmed, began to be ashamed of her fears, and bent over the water to watch the fish darting to and fro, so as now and then to alarm her mother, who begged her to sit still. She frequently said, "Dear mamma, there is no danger," and secretly wondered how any one could be afraid. There is something in the motion of a boat which disposes people to reverie, and Mr. Russell and Hannah were unusually silent. Not so the rowers, whose exertions began to make them rather too warm. Having passed the skirts of the pleasure ground, the river wound among sloping meadows, and the trees no longer

screened them from the south-west wind. Lewis, who had been out of practice since his quitting Oxford, found his hands rather stiff, and proposed raising the sail. The ladies had no objection, and Charles prepared to act as steersman. After flapping to and fro for a little while so as to alarm the Wellfords, the sail caught the wind, and they glided rapidly forward.

"How delightful!" said Rosina.

Lewis raised his countenance, glowing with exercise and animation. "Yes," said he, "this quick yet easy motion is much more luxurious than the regular jolt of rowing. You must take care, however, to sit still, Rosina, for every thing depends on the trimming of the boat."

"More than on the trimming of a hat, I can tell you," said Charles.

"Or of an M.P.," added Maria.

"Oh, there is no fear," said Rosina.

"My dear Rosina, pray attend to Lewis's directions," said her mother," a little fear is preferable to danger."

"Certainly," said Rosina smiling; and dipping her pretty fingers in the water, she began to hum

'Merrily, merrily bounds the bark,' to which Maria playfully added a second.

"I propose," said Mr. Pakenham, "that instead of tantalizing us by singing *sotto voce*, you should awaken the echoes with some boat glee sung in right earnest."

"Take care, Charles, or you will run us aground. We are coming to the shallows."

"Never fear," said he, "I know the river well enough. By the by, Maria, do you remember that ridiculous accident which happened to old Mrs. Wigmore when we were going up to Richmond?"

"For shame, Charles.—The woman was almost drowned."

"This Mrs. Wigmore," pursued Charles, laughing, "measured nearly two yards in circumference, and probably weighed a ton. How any one could think of inviting her to partake of an aquatic excursion, I cannot imagine. She was terrified lest every barge and bridge on the river should fall foul of us; and when the Diana steamer went by, good heavens! how she was alarmed at the swell! At length we hoisted a sail,—ha! ha!—I

think I see her now—she shut her eyes, clenched her hands,—ha! ha! ha!—and thought every moment would launch her into eternity. At every tack, she nearly fell into convulsions; and at length,—ha! ha! ha!—at length,—ho! ho!—a squall overtook us,—she set up one to match it,—ho! ho! ho!—and was launched into the deep!"

"Shocking!" cried Mrs. Shivers, "and what became of her?"

"Her pelisse," continued he, "her orange coloured pelisse, stiffened with whalebone and buckram, for a time bore her up—her parasol—ho! ho! ho!—which she grasped vigorously with both hands, caught the wind, and conveyed her like a majestic barge, right towards the Wandsworth coast; rich, as you know, in slime and rushes; and there, among the congregated mud of ages, she was safely deposited, howling most piteously, while all who beheld her were in convulsions!"

"Pray, Maria," said Mrs. Shivers," how much of this tale may we credit?"

"Indeed, aunt," said Maria, laughing, "nearly the whole of it is true. We were not far, how-

ever, from shore, and the parasol was an umbrella, so that the adventure was not quite so miraculous."

"And did none of you fine gentlemen try to save her?" inquired Mr. Russell.

"Not one of us," returned Charles, "she would have sunk any one who had taken her in tow. I, indeed, thought of jumping in, just for the look of the thing; but by the time I had taken off and folded up my coat and waistcoat, she was safely stranded. Good lack, what a pickle she was in!"

"Indeed she was!" ejaculated Maria. "Such a pelisse!"

"And such legs!"

"Poor woman!" said Hannah.

"How very ridiculous!" said Rosina.

"I begged her umbrella as a memento of the catastrophe," said Mr. Pakenham, "and the *print* of her nails is to be seen in its handle to this day."

"Oh, Charles, Charles!—"

"To finish the scene, she lifted up her voice and wept so vociferously that the households of Lord Egremont and the Archbishop of Dublin

rushed down to the water side to see what was the matter."

"Charles! Charles!"

"Ha! ha! ha! Ho! ho!" shouted Mr. Pakenham, laughing convulsively, "I shall never forget that day. The party was unique in every respect. Mrs. Wigmore's husband was a puny little fellow that put one exactly in mind of a Vauxhall sandwich. Then there was a girl who played off a great many fine airs on me, and was continually placing her foot in my way, for no other reason that I could perceive, than to show me that *for once* she had on silk stockings; for she had prodigiously thick ancles. There was a pair of lovers too, billing and cooing amazingly, of which I, sitting directly opposite, had the full benefit; and never was I more annoyed in my life—I don't patronize love-making."

"I thought the ladies were going to favour us with a song," said Mr. Russell.

"Will you join us in a glee, Charles?" said Maria.

"You know," he replied, "what poor assistance I can give you—Perhaps Miss Rosina Wellford—"

"Oh, indeed, indeed I cannot sing!" interrupted Rosina.

"That, of course," returned Mr. Pakenham; "I never expect to obtain a song from any young lady, not professional, with less than half an hour's entreaty. I will take out my watch. Now for it. Pennington! mind the turn of the river—Ahem! Miss Rosina Wellford—"

As he spoke, the sail, catching the breeze in a new direction, changed sides so suddenly as to excite a scream from all the females. Lewis exclaimed, "Sit still!" but Rosina, on the side unexpectedly lowered, unable to control her alarm, started up, lost her balance, and was precipitated into the river. The boat would assuredly have upset, had not Mr. Russell saved it by immediately rising, while Lewis, with a hasty interjection, sprang into the water after Rosina. It was little more than breast high, therefore not very dangerous, and Lewis, whether by swimming or wading, soon conveyed his hapless mistress to the shore, where, still supporting her drenched and trembling form, he looked at her with a mixture of partiality and reproach, as he said, "Did not I advise you to sit still?" They were both too much agitated

to have even heard the cry of terror which arose from their companions at the moment of Rosina's submersion. Charles, who had hastily scrambled over the ladies from his post at the rudder, seized one of the oars, while Mr. Russell took the other, and a few vigorous strokes brought them to the side of the dripping pair. The three minutes which had seemed interminable to Mrs. Wellford and Hannah, appeared less than a moment to Lewis.

Rosina, wet, forlorn, and terrified, had not yet lost so much of her usual self as to be quite insensible to ridicule. She hastily released herself from Lewis's arms, cast a fearful glance at her mother, whom she expected to look angry; and at Mr. Pakenham, whom she expected to look satirical; then turned half-reluctingly towards Lewis, whom she knew not how to thank, and burst into tears. Hannah was at her side in an instant; and Lewis's arm, in the fervour of the moment, again thrown round her waist, while every one's countenance expressed sincere concern. But Rosina again quickly put back Lewis's offered support, wiped her eyes, and with many blushes assured her friends that she was very silly and had been very much frightened, but not at all hurt. The only

remaining fear was of her catching cold; and it was therefore rapidly resolved, that she should return to the house on foot as fast as she could, accompanied by Hannah and Maria, while the elder ladies walked home at a more moderate pace, and Mr. Russell and Charles took back the boat. Lewis made the best of his way to Mr. Pakenham's dressing-room, where he obtained a temporary change of clothing; and Charles returned to the boat, looking extremely concerned, since it makes a great difference whether the person submerged be a pretty young woman, or a fat matron weighing a ton. Rosina knew not the sincerity of his commiseration; and though her mother's "how *could* you be so foolish, my dear?" had more of pity than displeasure in it, she dreaded that the time *would* come when she should be both scolded and quizzed. Her vaunts of not being afraid had been very ignominiously contradicted; and various little circumstances which she doubted not had been noticed by Mr. Pakenham's quick eye, made her regard her preserver with no very grateful feelings. Neither was it excessively pleasant to be completely wet through, and to have one's best clothes clinging

about one with the tenacity of a bathing gown, to say nothing of the mud they had collected. To cry, too! before strangers; and *such* strangers! people to whom she so particularly wished to appear in her best and most lady-like colours! All these untoward circumstances made poor Rosina's heart swell almost to bursting; and her attempt to speak in an unconstrained tone to Hannah and Maria nearly ended in a sob. They pitied her too much to expect her to talk; and as soon as they arrived at the house, Maria had her own bed warmed, and assisted Rosina in undressing. A fire was lighted, at which Hannah dried her sister's clothes, and Miss Pakenham ran down stairs to make her some tea as quickly as possible. Once in bed, Rosina's woes gradually subsided: she regained the command of her voice, and was able to speak cheerfully and gratefully to Miss Pakenham on her return, and to blame her own foolish conduct with a very good grace. Her mother now entered with Mrs. Shivers, who very earnestly pressed her remaining at the Pleasance for the night, which Mrs. Wellford seemed much inclined to second; but Rosina, alarmed at the thought of encountering the gay people who were

to arrive on the following day, declared she never took cold, and made light of the whole affair. It was therefore decided that she should in the evening return to Summerfield with her mother and sister, but in the mean time, remain by the fire in Miss Pakenham's room. Mrs. Wellford and Hannah now accompanied Mrs. Shivers down stairs, but Maria insisted on drinking tea with Rosina, and by her cheerful kindness, rendered this almost the pleasantest hour of a pleasant day. With the moment of leave-taking, Rosina's uneasiness and constraint of manner returned; she remained above stairs till the carriage was actually at the door, and then descended, encumbered by a furred cloak of Mrs. Shivers's, which she had been compelled to wear in addition to her own wraps. Lewis approached her with affectionate solicitude in his look, and Mr. Pakenham, advancing at the same moment, accosted her with "I shall wish the wherry had been sunk before we thought of encumbering its unlucky planks, Miss Rosina, if you suffer in consequence of your accident. My lamentations are perfectly disinterested, you must be aware, for of course it was highly gratifying to us to behold you rising like Venus from the sea;

and as to Mr. Pennington, he was a hero and Leander, both under one."

Rosina dreaded meeting his satiric eye; and after bidding farewell to Mrs. Shivers and Maria, who reminded her of her promised visit, she hastily curtseyed to Mr. Pakenham, and took Lewis's offered arm. Charles accompanied them to the carriage door, and could not help indulging, to the last, in his 'dear wit.' "You had pleasant weather for your bathing, you will grant," said he, laughing, as they crossed the hall. "In future, whenever you meet with a tallow-chandler advertizing his 'short dips,' I dare say you will think of the Pleasance. I should like to have been in Pennington's shoes at *one* time. However, he is in mine, at present, which amounts to the same thing."

"Not quite," said Lewis, stealing a look at Rosina's glowing cheek, and pressing her hand fervently. She hastily withdrew it and entered the carriage. Mr. Pakenham bowed, and she thought irony lurked in his smile. So effectually does an hour of pain damp a day of pleasure, that Rosina took scarcely any part in the animated conversation of her mother and sister on the

events of the day, and spent the greater part of the ride in ruminating on the mischances of the afternoon. She had scarcely said or done anything that she did not now wish altered. She fancied she heard Mr. Pakenham describing the catastrophe of the water-party with as much zest as the calamity of the unfortunate Mrs. Wigmore; she feared that to Mrs. Shivers she must have appeared heedless and weak; to Mr. Russell, affected; and to Lewis, ungrateful. Pondering on these topics, she scarcely felt the feverish throbbing of her head or the ague chills that ran through her frame. Her night, however, was sleepless; and, on the following morning, she found herself labouring under so severe a cold as to prevent her from rising.

CHAPTER XVII.

EFFECTS OF COLD BATHING.

"RUSSELL!——" said Lewis Pennington, drawing a deep breath that sounded excessively like a sigh, as they walked home from Mrs. Shivers's, "I certainly am in love!"

"That is a remarkable discovery!" returned Mr. Russell, laughing. "Truly, it places you nearly on a level with Newton and Mungo Park! The object of your visit to Summerfield is answered then, I suppose; for, in my poor judgement, you came ready primed and loaded, and only required a touch to go off."

"Do not laugh at me," said Lewis, still *al sospiroso*, "for I am very serious."

"Well, I will be serious too," returned his friend, "and say that I think your love-affairs are in a very flourishing train. Nothing could be more lucky than your rescue of Rosina to-day;

and to-morrow, I dare say, you will have a violent cold, which will work upon her compassion."

"She is more likely to take cold than I am, I fear," said Lewis.

"Oh, do not despair," rejoined his companion, "I perceive a very promising huskiness in your voice already."

"As to my *rescue*, as you term it," pursued Lewis, "the risk to myself was so slight that it would be ridiculous to plume myself upon it; and I fear it made no very strong impression on her whom I most wish to please."

"Nay," interrupted Mr. Russell, "if Rosina is untouched by the service you have rendered her, her heart must be as hard as the nether millstone. But I think differently of her. What a blush glowed on her cheek when we reached the bank!"

Lewis smiled, though the darkness prevented Mr. Russell from seeing the momentary illumination of his countenance. "All might be well enough," exclaimed he abruptly, "if it were not for that confounded fellow, Huntley!"

"I manœuvred to walk with Rosina to-day," said Mr. Russell, "in order to give her a little lecture on her behaviour of Saturday night; but

somehow the subject stuck in my throat, and, like the man in the old song, 'never a word could I say.'"

"I am glad of it," said Lewis, "for I would not owe any change in her manner to interference. No, let her feel and judge for herself; though I wish to heaven we were fairly rid of that sly, malicious, double-faced, insinuating——"

"My dear Lewis," interrupted Mr. Russell, "I cannot hear poor Huntley thus abused. It is not his fault that a lively, thoughtless girl should be dazzled by his wit, genius, and varied power of pleasing."

"Mr. Russell," said Lewis gravely, "it is fine to preach moderation to another; but wait till your own time comes—wait till he supplants yourself, and then see what becomes of your patience! Perhaps the trial may not be so very far off."

"I am at a loss to understand you," said Mr. Russell. "Supplant *me?* In what manner? What do you mean?"

Lewis laughed expressively, and replied, "We lovers, Mr. Russell, are quick sighted."

"I had thought till now," rejoined his friend, "that Love was blind."

"Yes, to the faults of his mistress," said Lewis, still laughing, "but lovers, like free-masons, have a wonderful knack of finding out each other."

They walked on in silence; till Mr. Russell resumed, with "But, Pennington, I wish you would tell me what you alluded to just now—Supplant me!—What could you be thinking of?"

"Aha! that rankles, does it?" said Lewis. "My meaning was full plain, I think."

"Obscure enough for a dull fellow like me to miss it," said Mr. Russell, rather uneasily. "Where I have advanced no pretensions, I do not see how I can well be supplanted."

"Is not my cousin Hannah," inquired Lewis with a smile, "almost as charming as her sister?"

"Ahem!" responded Mr. Russell,—"'And is not a buff jerkin a most sweet robe of durance?'"

"Very good, Russell! I take!" laughed Lewis. "You are very sly and very silent, and I am just the reverse of both; but take heed, I advise you—fair and softly do not *always* win the day."

Lewis found a letter from Marianne awaiting him at the vicarage. At the head of the sheet was written in Dr. Pennington's large, firm hand—

'Dear Son,

'What are you doing at Summerfield?'

"I believe," said Lewis, as he read this laconic inquiry to his friend, "my truest answer would be—

'Dear Father,

'Playing the fool!'"

"Do you think, Lewis, your father would be perfectly satisfied at your engaging yourself to Rosina Wellford?"

"I don't know," said Lewis gloomily. "Yes, I think he would. He is not mercenary. Once, when I used to flirt a good deal with a Miss Edgar, an heiress, he said, 'I would rather be pleased with my daughter-in-law's disposition than her fortune.'"

"If you *have* any doubts, Lewis, now is the time for acting with decision, and tearing yourself from Rosina while her affections are apparently her own. I have not spoken so plainly before, because you never treated me with sufficient confidence to excuse my doing so. You will attribute my straight-forwardness to the right motive, for I need hardly say, that the loss of such a guest as

you are, will be excessively regretted by me, come when it may."

"I must not linger here much longer," sighed Lewis, twisting Marianne's letter into a thousand shapes; "September has come, and I am just where I was in August, only some fathoms deeper in love."

Here the dialogue ended.

Rosina awoke on Tuesday morning, to a consciousness of all the miseries of a severe cold. Among her most praiseworthy habits was that of rising early, like Dryden's Emilia, "to sport and trip along in cool of day;" and even indisposition could not incline her to feel a day spent in bed in any other light than that of a penance. Her mind was quite on the alert; and the sound of voices in the parlour beneath, soon after breakfast, increased her mortification at being kept in dormitorial confinement.

"What has kept you so long?" cried she, rather impatiently, as her sister re-entered her bedroom. "Did not I hear voices down stairs?"

"Yes, Mr. Huntley called; and I had to tell him of your indisposition as an excuse for our not sitting to him to-day."

"It was very kind of you," said Rosina, "to sacrifice yourself for me."

"Sacrifice myself," repeated Hannah, laughing. "That is certainly rather a strong expression. I do not feel it to be any sacrifice."

"I am afraid I should, in your place," said Rosina.

"I shall enjoy myself much more," said Hannah, "sitting by your bed-side and talking over all that happened yesterday, than in sitting for my likeness to Mr. Huntley. Dear Lewis Pennington! I shall love him as long as I live. How heroically he behaved!"

"So he did, certainly," said Rosina,—"and yet the water was not very deep."

"That was not Lewis's fault," returned Hannah, gaily, "and it was quite deep enough to drown you, if he had not sprung to your assistance. No body else in the boat would have acted with such promptitude; unless indeed, Mr. Russell—"

"Oh, Hannah! no man would stand by and see a woman drown! especially in the presence of ladies—"

"Well, perhaps not," replied Hannah, "but there are different ways of setting about a thing.

Mr. Pakenham would have stopped to fold up his coat and waistcoat."

"My dear, you cannot conceive what a dread I have of that man! did not he frighten you exceedingly?"

"Not in the least," said Hannah. "His wit amused me, and I felt myself far too insignificant a person to attract his ill-nature. No gentleman would dare to ridicule a lady to her face; and as to what he might say of me in my absence, I shall probably never see him again, therefore it does not give me the slightest concern."

"How tranquil you are!" said Rosina, with a sigh. "I wish I had half as much philosophy."

"The worst he could say of us," pursued Hannah, "would be that we were country girls without wit or fashion, and where would be the mighty harm in that?"

"They say," resumed Rosina, after a pause, "that there is but one step between the sublime and the ridiculous. Now, in a romance, it seems very grand for a lady to fall into a river, and for a gentleman to bring her out again; but when it comes to be plain matter of fact, there are many little things which a novelist takes care to leave out,

and which, I am afraid, give the whole business rather a ridiculous air."

"If that *is* the case," said Hannah, "every one was too much alarmed to notice it. Mrs. Shivers was as pale as death, and Mr. Russell and Mr. Pakenham rowed as if their lives depended on every stroke. I thought I never saw any one look more noble than Lewis did when he came up to you!—flushed with exertion, and glowing with courage and affection and every honest feeling."

"I hardly dare ask you how *I* looked," said Rosina, wistfully.

"Why, certainly," said Hannah, smiling, "I *have* seen you to more advantage. When you first appeared from the water, you were clinging fast to Lewis's neck, and glad enough I was to see you; but when we landed, you were standing with your back to him, looking very red and very sulky, your frock covered to your knees with mud, your hair drenched, your bonnet out of shape; and in short, if Mr. Pakenham *had* been inclined to laugh——."

"Oh, horrible! I see myself exactly," cried Rosina, tossing on her pillow; "do not go on, for pity's sake!"

"Do you know," pursued Hannah, "I thought you behaved rather unkindly to your preserver—"

"My preserver! pshaw! when the water was not four feet deep!"

"Well then, to poor Lewis. I can make allowance for all awkwardness of feeling; but still, instead of looking as if he had done you an injury rather than a service, I should, in your place, have thanked him gratefully, and there would have been an end of it."

"My dear Hannah, you always do no more than just the thing you ought. I could not trust myself to speak a syllable, so afraid was I of that odious Mr. Pakenham."

"Still, ridicule, Rosina?" said Hannah. "What a pity it is you allow yourself to be so much governed by so weak a fear!"

"Oh, Hannah! I am too unwell to bear sermonizing to-day. Do fetch a book, there is a dear girl, and read to me, for I have thought enough of these cross accidents all night."

Hannah complied with her wish; and was debating what book she should take up to her sister, when she was again detained by a visitor. It was Lewis Pennington.

"Good morning, Hannah," said he. "How are you all, this morning? and especially, how is Rosina after her accident?"

"I am sorry to say she is confined to her bed," replied Hannah.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Lewis, with a look of alarm.

"But there is no need for apprehension," she continued. "Rosina takes a fit of illness as she does a fit of anything else; anger, for instance; it comes on very suddenly, and goes off almost as rapidly."

"A fit of anger," repeated Lewis, smiling. "What a good-humoured sister you are, Hannah! But should not Rosina have advice?"

"Oh, mamma knows perfectly well how to treat Rosina's colds. We may be thankful that she has escaped with nothing worse."

"We may indeed," said Lewis.

"And I hope you will not suffer for your heroic conduct," added she. "We shall never forget it."

"Heroic! you will make me ashamed of myself," cried Lewis. "The water was scarcely breast-high."

"True; but as we were observing just before

you came, you did not pause to consider its depth. Yours was the action of a moment."

"Did Rosina say so?" asked Lewis, quickly.

"I think," said the truth-telling Hannah, "the observation was mine, and that it was Rosina who assented to it."

At any rate, thought Lewis, complacently, they have made the affair the subject of conversation. "My dear Hannah," said he, drawing his chair closer to hers, "to deal frankly with you who have so much sincerity yourself, I was rather surprised—Come, I must speak the truth—rather hurt, at Rosina's conduct yesterday. As to thanking me, or anything of the sort, that would have been nonsense; but without setting any inordinate value on the little service I was able to render her, surely a wet jacket deserved a smile—hey, Hannah?—a word or a look? She would have given as much as that, would not she, to Mr. Huntley, if he had offered her an umbrella on a rainy day."

"Oh, Lewis!" said Hannah, smiling, "you must not be hard upon Rosina. You know her chief, almost her only fault, is being too keenly alive to ridicule. That satirical Mr. Pakenham, with his story of the fat old lady, so alarmed her

imagination, that she scarcely dared to look or speak, for fear of exposing herself to his irony."

"Was that all?" cried Lewis. "Insolent puppy! If he had dared to utter, or even look irony at such a moment as that, I would have knocked him down!" And starting up, Lewis walked towards the window, and bent through the open casement, apparently occupied in inhaling the perfume of sweet peas and mignionette, which it admitted. After a pause of some length, he exclaimed, "What a sweet place this Summerfield is! I envy Russell the power of remaining in it."

"You would hardly wish, however, to change situations with him, I should think."

"As to that, nobody, you know, would like to give up their identity; but distinct from such a feeling, why do you think I should not be happy to change with Mr. Russell?"

"He has a limited income, a small establishment, no wife or near relations, little congenial society, and a variety of duties which he must regularly perform, willing or unwilling."

"Still, Hannah, he is contented, and might be happy, if he would but marry."

"Perhaps he thinks he is not rich enough."

"He has more than he can spend as a single man, except in charity. An uncle left him four or five thousand pounds last year."

"I suppose, then, he prefers a single life."

"Why, we must think so, for want of a better supposition, and yet no one is more able to appreciate really good female society. Perhaps, however, he is a despised man, or has reason to think that he should be one."

"I can hardly think that."

Lewis looked at her earnestly. There was no covert meaning to be detected in her face. Meetting his eyes, however, and perceiving their penetrating expression, Hannah slightly blushed, at the idea of having possibly said too much. Mrs. Wellford entered at the same moment, followed by Matthew, who shook Lewis heartily by the hand.

"Pennington, you are a fine fellow!" said he. "My mother tells me you have saved Rosina from drowning."

Lewis made light of the affair.

"Well," said Matthew "I am glad you seem

none the worse for it; but Rosina is in bed, I hear. Shall I step up to her, mother? I will bleed her, if you like."

Mrs. Wellford did not consider this measure advisable, and Hannah prepared to return to Rosina, now that her mother and brother could supply her place in the parlour. "Tell her, Hannah," cried Matthew, calling after her as she went up stairs, "that if she likes to be bled, I'm no bungler. I opened a vein for Mrs. Hinckley yesterday, therefore Rosina need not laugh at me. I've practised upon the poor this twelvemonth!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

ALL IN THE WRONG.

Rosina was so much better, the next day, as to be able to leave her bed, though her mother still imprisoned her to her room. Her books and drawing materials, and Hannah's society, left her little to complain of; and a little rose-coloured note of inquiry from Miss Pakenham, assisted in raising her spirits. Voices in the parlour beneath again provoked her curiosity; and while she was debating whether the tones were those of Mr. Huntley or Lewis Pennington, Hannah made her appearance.

"Mr. Huntley and Miss Phœbe Holland are down stairs," said she.

"Mr. Huntley and Phœbe Holland!" repeated Rosina. "What! did they come together?"

"I believe they fell in with each other in the

lane. Miss Phœbe came to ask us to accompany them on a gipsy party to-morrow. The Misses Browns are staying at the Grange, and the Goods are going to join them in a pic-nic."

"I suppose mamma will say I am not well enough," observed Rosina. "Is any one else to be of the party?"

"Mr. Russell and Lewis Pennington; and now, Phœbe has given a sort of joking invitation to Mr. Huntley."

"I should like to go, amazingly. Will mamma let me, do you think? I am sure I am well enough."

"Mamma at first refused outright; but so much was said about it, that knowing how quickly your colds pass off, she began to waver, and sent me up stairs to ask what you yourself thought about it."

"The woman that deliberates is lost!" cried Rosina, joyfully. "Since mamma wavers, you may be sure she will let me go. My dear, tell her I never felt better in my life."

"But, Rosina—"

"But, Hannah! say no more about it; I assure you it is the fact. There was not the least occa-

sion for my remaining up stairs to-day. Feel my hands; are they feverish? I am perfectly well."

"I hope you are," said Hannah, slowly retiring.

"Depend upon it, my dear. Make haste and tell mamma I hope she will accept the invitation by all means."

Rosina's spirits prevented her shewing any signs of indisposition during the remainder of the day. Lewis called, but only saw Mrs. Wellford. On the following morning, Rosina actually felt quite well; but now an unforeseen obstacle to the gipsy party presented itself. Mrs. Wellford arose with a very bad headache, which completely disinclined her to join the pic-nic. The girls immediately gave up every idea of leaving her, but though they said nothing of their disappointment, their mother was vexed to occasion it, and proposed their accompanying Mr. and Mrs. Good. She required no nursing; nothing but darkness and quiet; and after a little good-natured altercation, Hannah yielded, more for Rosina's sake than her own. Accordingly, at about one o'clock, to Mr. Good's they proceeded; and found Tom, William, and Fanny, who were

to be of the party, scampering up and down stairs in high spirits. Matthew ran in from the surgery, to have a kiss from his sisters and ten minutes' gossip. He could not be spared to accompany them; he was going over to 'old Kippis of the Grove;' and seemed so happy in his growing importance as to have little room for regret. He told Rosina she looked feverish, wished Hannah would wear smarter looking bonnets, but allowed that as times went, neither of the girls were ugly; after which, with another kiss from each, he ran away. Mrs. Good, in a new bonnet, was packing up cold chicken, tongue, and apple puffs; and presently her husband drove up to the door, after going his morning rounds; Matthew jumped into the gig, received his parting instructions for the Grove, and went off. Mr. Good was glad to find every one and every thing ready to the appointed minute, and the walking party proceeded to the Grange. Here they found tongues clattering, provisions packing, and silk bonnets popping in and out of rooms and closets with prodigious rapidity. The Miss Browns were old acqaintance; and they seemed more voluble and more finely dressed than ever. The want of punctuality in 'the beaux'

was grievously regretted. Lewis at length made his appearance, but had to apologize for the non-attendance of Mr. Russell. He had not seen Rosina since the day at the Pleasance; and having hurried through his excuses as speedily as possible, he approached her to hope that she had entirely recovered from her cold. Rosina blushed, and attempted to faulter her tardy thanks, but became embarrassed, and was glad that he interrupted her with inquiries after her mother. Mr. Huntley had made his *entrée* immediately after Lewis; and he no sooner perceived Rosina than his dark eyes brightened, and he hastened to congratulate her on her recovery.

"Your accident was truly alarming," said he. "How fortunate it was that Mr. Pennington acted with such courage and promptitude! No man ought to have done less, but few men have an opportunity afforded them of doing so much; and you will pardon me, I think, for being thankful that such is the case. I would hardly wish you a second fall into the water, even that I might be at hand to jump in after you."

Rosina smiled, and looking towards Lewis, who was within hearing, saw him shrug his shoulders

and curl his lip. In another moment, he was at her side, and had drawn her arm, with a smile, within his own. The party were starting; and Rosina, though she heard Huntley still making the accident the subject of his discourse to Hannah, felt that she ought not to complain of her fate.

The point of destination was a favourite spot on Heeley Common, which the Miss Browns, who loved to "set something going," had discovered on the preceding Sunday to be a famous place for a dinner. The donkey chaise was in requisition for the children, as well as for the transportation of camp-stools, shawls, and umbrellas; and the walkers proceeded in sociable little knots of two and three, as it suited their pleasure. Huntley, to his mortification, was entangled among the Miss Browns and Miss Hollands, beyond the power of escape or rescue; Hannah followed Mr. and Mrs. Good, and Lewis and Rosina, a few paces in arrear, occasionally joined them in conversation, till, quitting the fields, they entered a kind of little thicket, intersected by many small paths. Here they gradually separated beyond speaking distance, and finally lost sight of each other.

Lewis seemed unlike his usual self, plunged in reverie, and speaking in monosyllables. After walking *tête-a-tête* with Rosina for some time, he became suddenly aware that a silence of awkward length required to be broken; but, like the ghosts of yore, he seemed obliged to wait till she should speak first. This she presently did, with a very simple inquiry.

"Have you heard from home lately?"

"Yes, the night before last. My father asks me, Rosina,—what I do at Summerfield."

"You must tell him then," said Rosina, forcing a laugh, "that you save young ladies from drowning."

Lewis was silent; and, with a slight degree of confusion, she resumed.

"Lewis, I am afraid—Hannah thinks, that I—I—"

"That what, Rosina? Of what are you afraid?—Not of me—You *need* not be—"

"I was only going to say, that, after all that happened at the Pleasance, when you acted so bravely and so generously, I feared I must have seemed ungrateful—"

"Not in the least, Rosina—"

"At any rate, I ought to have thanked you; which I do now, very gratefully."

"Pray, say no more about it; I was but too happy to be of any service."

"You are none the worse, I hope—"

"Not in the least. No, Rosina, I look back on that day with more pleasure than pain."

"That odious Mr. Pakenham—"

"Ah, Hannah told me that you were dreadfully afraid of him; and that I might thank *him* for any little unkindness which had appeared in your manner. But, Rosina, why would you allow the acquaintance of an hour to have more influence over you than an old attached friend? Why are you so sensitive to ridicule? It is not for your happiness. I hope," added he earnestly, "that you will forgive me for being so plain-spoken."

There was an accent of tenderness in Lewis's tone which disarmed anger.

"Certainly, Lewis," she replied.

"I have been very bold to say so much," pursued Lewis, in a more hurried manner; "but I must take shelter under the wide privileges of a cousin."

Rosina laughed; and Lewis, encouraged by this, added, "You know, cousins venture to tell each other of their little faults sometimes."

"Undoubtedly," said Rosina, "and now you are going to lecture me a little on mine, I suppose."

She was thinking of the Pleasance; *he* was thinking of Saturday evening.

"If I dared," said he, emboldened by her smile, "I certainly would. Come, I will extend the same privilege to you: we will confess our sins and grant mutual absolution. Now tell me, Rosy, what spirit of mischief inspired you that night at Mrs. Good's?"

"None, that I know of," replied she, laughing, with a little pique.

"Nay, Rosina," said he, more seriously, "do not feign forgetfulness or misapprehension. You know you meant to vex me."

"Vex you!—by what?"

"By almost every thing you looked, did, and said."

"Really, Lewis, I do not know what right you have to accuse me of such intentions."

"The right, perhaps, may admit of more dis-

pute than the intentions," said he; "but you know I am only using my cousinly privilege. We agreed to grant each other absolution."

"*I* agreed to no such thing, and I think ideas of cousinly privilege may extend too far."

"Well, Rosina, do not let us cavil about trifles. Question my right, if you will; but yield to that honest candour which generally distinguishes you. Say that you are sorry you gave me pain, and the affair shall be at rest for ever."

"Sorry I gave you pain! How came you to take offence so easily? By the manner in which you put the question, you would imply that offence was *meant*."

"And surely it was so."

"Nonsense!"

"Remember your blush when I showed you that passage of Madame de Genlis'!"

"I blushed with displeasure. What right had you to apply the passage to me?"

"Never mind the *right*, Rosina. The passage did apply. You know you were inflicting pain on one who loved you."

"Nonsense!" said Rosina, colouring; and wishing much to run away.

"True enough," said Lewis, who thought that now or never should be the moment. "For you to pretend to think that I care no more for you than one cousin does for another, would be as absurd as to say that the sun does not shine, or the grass grow; you *do* know that I love you, though how much it is impossible you *should* know. That point requires no settling; but it is a most important one for me to know whether you really have any serious regard for me or not. No woman can be a coquette who truly loves."

"Upon my word, Mr. Pennington," said Rosina, whose cheeks were blazing, "you are talking very strangely."

"Tell me, Rosina!" exclaimed he, stopping short, and dropping the little switch with which he had been very industriously threshing the underwood—"Tell me, Rosina," said he, taking her hand, "that my love is not quite hopeless —that you can return such honest affection as mine."

"I cannot," said she, snatching away her hand, and walking on quickly.

"Oh! how have I been deceived!" exclaimed Lewis.

"Not by me," said Rosina. "I never feigned more than I felt."

"Ungrateful girl!" cried he.

"How ungrateful?" said Rosina. "We were playfellows in childhood, and, within the last month, you have been kind enough to bestow much attention upon me; but that does not necessarily oblige me to return your affection, does it? Nay, *are* our affections in our own power? I am sure they are not."

Lewis accompanied her silently for some time; and then, as if to himself, rather than her, murmured—

> "Is all the counsel that we two have shared,
> When we have chid the hasty-footed time
> For parting us,—oh! and is all forgot?"

He looked earnestly at her. Rosina breathed quickly, but made no answer. Then, with sudden passion, he exclaimed—"Detested Huntley! it is he who has stepped between us! Mark my words, Rosina. You think he loves you, but bitterly will you rue the mistake at some future day. He is wholly unworthy of you. You know nothing of him; and it is astonishing to me how your mother and Mr. Russell could ever allow a

man of his description to obtain such a familiar footing among you. He is playing a double part; and if I had a brother's right to call him to account, he should atone for his conduct, or—I would blow his brains out!"

"Lewis! Lewis! this is dreadful!" cried Rosina, terrified at a threat which would highly have amused Dr. Pennington. "I could not have believed you capable of such vindictive jealousy. Not half an hour ago, Mr. Huntley was warmly praising you, who speak of him so unjustly. Let us say no more of this—the subject had better be at rest between us."

Lewis moodily obeyed, and walked at her side in perfect silence. At length, after full ten minutes' endurance, he exclaimed, "I can bear this no longer! Rosina, I must leave you. After what has passed, how can we,—or at least, how can I speak, look, or move, in the presence of those people, with tolerable composure? *You* must necessarily wish for my absence. The Goods and your sister are resting on that stile at the foot of the hill. Will you dispense with my escort for so short a distance?"

"Willingly,—gladly," said Rosina.

"Farewell then," returned he hastily, "tell them I have a headache, heartache, what you will. To be forced to sit laughing and talking nonsense among a set of thoughtless boisterous people, when one's heart is full of bitterness,—in the presence of a rival, too!—would be intolerable. Farewell."

She thought, at that moment, of the instant when the waters had closed over her at Mrs. Shivers's.

"Lewis!" said she, faulteringly.

"Ha!—what, Rosina?" cried Lewis with eagerness.

"I only wished to say that, if I have spoken more unkindly than the occasion required, I hope you will forgive me—and that I shall never forget the day at the Pleasance—and—"

"And what?—"

"Pray, Lewis, say nothing to my mother of what has passed."

"Is that all?" said he, with a look of disappointment. "You may depend upon me. Farewell."

In a moment he was gone. Luckily there was no water to put him in mind of making a short

end to his woes as he walked home. The partridges sprang whirring from beneath his feet as he returned through the cornfields; but no pleasing associations with pointers and Joe Mantons did they awaken in his gloomy mind. He reached the vicarage, and shut himself up in his bedroom.

As for the author of his misery, she waited till his retreating footsteps could no longer be heard; and then, when all the weeping of Niobe could not have brought him back, she burst into tears.

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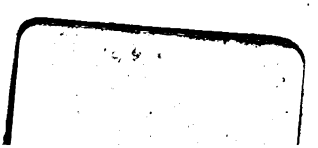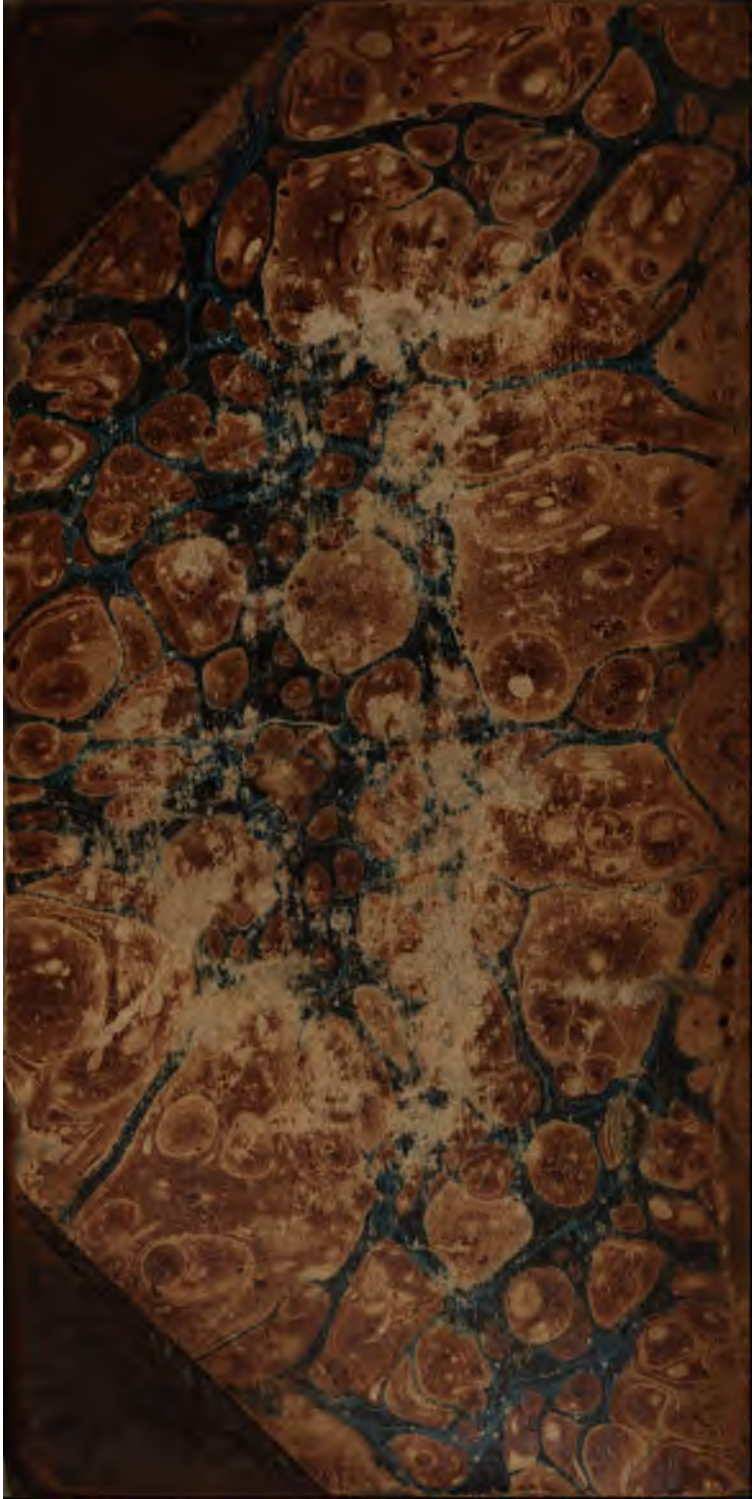
G. Woodfall, Printer, Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.